Teaching Children to Think *Joseph Featherstone*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

September 9, 1967, 35 cents

Israel and Nasser

"What Will Johnson Do?"

Philip Ben, Leo Muray

Unpolished Nigger

Morris Renek

Politics of Consortium

Michael Miles

Tennessee Rebels

Livingston Jackson

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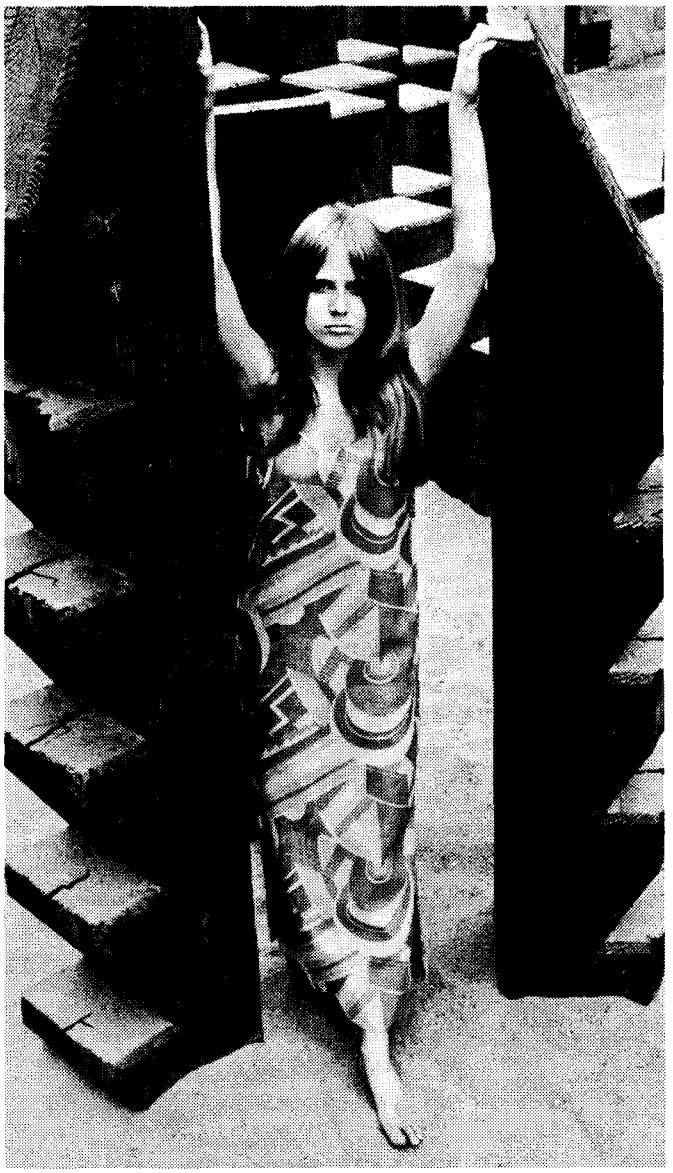

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

All-Time Low

★ President Johnson recently has been seeing groups of newsmen informally. He talks steadily and justifies himself. It apparently gives him relief. The country will judge him next year, he says, on whether he did enough in Vietnam and in civil disorders. He feels his policy is right and he is going ahead.

Our view is that if the war continues next year he will be defeated. There is factual evidence: nearly half of 84 senators polled by the Associated Press say they no longer endorse the Johnson war policy. George Romney is switching to the dove side. The Harris poll reports a drop from 51 to 37 percent in six weeks among those willing to keep fighting "to get a negotiated truce." Gallup says Romney now leads Johnson (49 percent-41 percent) in a trial presidential heat. A state poll by the *Minneapolis Tribune* shows support for the President dropping from 47 percent to 38 percent – an all-time low.

But we trust personal observation as much as polls. No war songs! We thought Tin Pan Alley could glamorize anything. Is it just unpopular, this war? Again and again we hear people say that there must be some easy way to win. By machines. By bombs. By pushbuttons. They can't believe a little country can defy the mightiest.

That is why Secretary McNamara's testimony was vital; he categorically denied that Hanoi can be bombed to the peace table. At first, we think, the man in Sanderson, Texas, won't believe it. Here comes General McConnell, Air Force Chief of Staff, who denies it! For a while the public may be more confused than ever. This journal has been saying for some years now, that bombing wouldn't win, and it's nice to have Mr. McNamara's authoritative support. Millions of Americans haven't understood; they have only gone along with the war because they thought there was some quick, sanitary way to victory. Remove that faith, and anger follows.

We assume Mr. Johnson knows the political score as well as anybody. We assume he will push efforts at settlement. The Saigon election opens an opportunity. If this doesn't work, there will be more escalation. There are signs that Mr. Johnson may be giving support to the McConnells at the Pentagon rather than to Secretary McNamara. Mr. Johnson argues that he is holding warhawks in check. The days do not look easy for Mr. McNamara.

The war takes $2 billion a month but the real price is different. The US can afford the war, and the moon shot, and the war on poverty. Gross national product will increase by $55-billion this year. Yes, the cash is there. We see three other items, however.

Disillusionment from Vietnam is likely to cause a revulsion from all foreign action, useful or not. The UN drive to aid have-not nations has all but collapsed. In five or six years we are probably going to see the worst famine in history. But US foreign aid is being cut sharply: Vietnam is the excuse.

Secondly, there's a moral blight that falls particularly on youth. The draft is grossly unfair; it damages the young man evading service more than the one who fights. We are raising a generation of cynics.

Finally, there's poverty. Lippmann says no nation can carry on two crusades at the same time. There's money enough, we believe, for both, but the emotional reservoir runs dry. Mr. Johnson's mistake is thinking he can fight both simultaneously.

Whitey Hasn't Learned

★ And that brings us to the racial issue. We keep thinking about those charred shells on 12th Street in Detroit, one of the most racially enlightened cities in the nation. If it could happen in Detroit it could happen anywhere. Detroit was full of community action programs. Our observation in Detroit convinced us that the whole panoply of enlightened, ameliorative actions (while good in themselves) won't stop riots, the only things that will stop them are jobs and social justice. We think Whitey hasn't learned the lesson.

We would expect riots to continue next summer in the presidential race. If so, they will aid George Wallace's effort to throw the election into the House. It could be the bitterest contest in modern times.

Congress shows no disposition to meet the flickering racial mutiny. Many congressmen are aching for a showdown, with savage repression. They see "hoodlums" organized by communists causing the riots; *i.e.*, a conspiracy. They vote down a rat control bill; advocate an anti-riot bill; cut down poverty funds.

Yet these brief, past two months look dangerously like a polarization of black-white antagonism. Even the tortured middle-class Negroes may be alienated. And to paint the full picture, all this time in Alabama and Mississippi, Negro mothers are taking biological revenge against society with an astonishing birthrate.

Point of No Return?

★ Ultimate polarization can be averted; we have probably not passed the point of no return. And yet the symptoms are there. Guns are purchasable at the nearest sporting goods store. Ten year olds can make Molotov cocktails. Cities are flammable. Violence is depicted everywhere. (A movie about the Valentine's Day massacre followed us recently across America, and the film derives roguish pleasure from murder by social pariahs who "have nothing to lose.") In Detroit the jittery National Guard sprayed homes with machine guns; their performance was disgraceful. Newark's Mayor Addonizio told Congress it is a "cruel myth" that middle-class Americans want to save the cities. "Affluent Americans," he said, "are more gripped by the need to buy a vacation home, a sports car for their college-bound son and a second color TV set than with sharing their affluence with the poor." . . . That's Watts; that's Detroit.

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National Guardsmen

Mack Sennett could have choreographed the Michigan National Guard in the Detroit riots or duplicated the black humor of the Guard's defenders. Imagine the scene. Rioting breaks out. The Detroit cops clearly can't handle it alone. George (Alphonse) Romney and Lyndon (Gaston) Johnson take turns eschewing responsibility for the inevitable Guard call-up. Finally enter 8,200 men characterized by their commander as "nervous, trigger-happy." Afraid of what they might do with loaded guns, Lt. Gen. John L. Throckmorton orders them to keep their ammunition in their pockets and await orders to fire. But somehow the instructions are ignored. His subordinates are insubordinate. Ninety percent of the men, by one estimate, disobey or never learn of the command.

Thirty-eight civilians died in Detroit, nearly all of them from gunshot wounds inflicted not by snipers but by guardsmen and police. A four-year-old child was killed when a 50-caliber tank-mounted machine gun was fired into her apartment. Seven of the eight guardsmen wounded (some of them apparently were shot by other guardsmen) had loaded weapons. The eighth shot himself in the foot. Guard General Cecil Simmons, who served under Throckmorton and who is a traffic engineer when he is not putting down insurrections, couldn't believe Throckmorton's order to keep the men unarmed. Simmons, in a Freudian slip, favored using "as much force as possible." "From time immemorial, in floods, riots, disasters, looters have been shot," he said.

No one has done so much to discredit the Guard as its ardent congressional defenders. Rep. F. Edward ("let's forget the First Amendment") Hébert of Louisiana held hearings of his Armed Services subcommittee, ostensibly to examine the fitness of the National Guard to cope with civil disturbances. Instead, he staged an insulting inquisition in which he condemned the generals for trying to save lives and commended the troops for their good sense in disobeying orders. He denounced the President's riot commission for reasonably suggesting that riot training be augmented and that the Guard might have more rapport with the ghetto if it were integrated (only one percent of 418,000 guardsmen are Negro). For the new commission to speak such common sense so soon after it had been formed by Mr. Johnson was, said Hébert, "ultraprecipitous." That chairman Otto Kerner as governor of Illinois serves as commander in chief of his state's National Guard, and presumably knows something about the

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Guard's deficiencies, didn't impress the congressman.

As if Mr. Hébert and his intemperate defense were not enough, the National Guard Association of the United States has taken up the blunderbuss. Apparently agreeing with the Pentagon official who said the whole affair was a press smear job, the association has set out to set the record straight in full-page apologias in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Says one of the ads: "No one can measure the suffering the National Guard has relieved. No one can assess the tragedy the National Guard has averted. No one can count the number of lives the National Guard has saved." In addition, the association has retained a New York ad agency for a fee of $50,000 to create a new, or at least work an autoplastic change in the Guard's image. The image could use some improving. Mr. Hébert and the Guard Association wrongly think it can be done by denying everything. Unfortunately, we've not seen the last of ghetto riots. And until we make the kind of painful commitments necessary to improve the lives of Negroes, we might as well accustom ourselves to annual replays of Detroit. But calling out an uncivilized force which ends up killing more people than the rioters only multiplies the damage. Integrating the Guard would only mean Negro killing Negro. Enlisting local people as policemen without guns to help quell violence would surely be preferable to such an occupying foreign force. This kind of "maximum feasible participation" might have saved the devastation of Detroit.

Bombing

The charade of the Senate bombing hearings ended none too soon. There was something fishy about them. Too much was made of differences between Defense Secretary McNamara and the generals and admirals who called for intensified bombing. These were differences mostly of tone and style, which obscured the considerable agreement between the parties. McNamara virtually announced that more targets may be attacked. Also he indirectly gave notice to Hanoi – and the Soviet Union – of how much more difficult the war could become for them if a decision were made to attack the ports of Haiphong, Hon Gai and Cam Pha. The highly publicized show put on by the Senate Preparedness Investigating subcommittee, in short, smacked too much of cooperation with the White House. It was a great contrast to the subcommittee's normal, close-to-the-vest style of operating. And the message was underlined by the new bombing raids on Hanoi and near the border of China. The message appears to read, "Come, let us reason together or I'll beat your brains out, as you see I'm being urged to do."

What the President may not have anticipated was the reaction in the United States. Judging by the way he has operated in the past, it is reasonable to assume that he thought the bombing hearings would counteract the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, take the play away from hawks like House Minority Leader Gerald Ford (R, Mich.), and slow the growth of antiwar sentiment in the country. Lyndon Johnson has bragged that he gave the peace movement in this country a stature it could not have won on its own, by allowing his officials to debate its spokesmen. The purpose was to create an antidote to what the Administration believed would otherwise be overwhelming public demand for escalation. It is possible that he is now trying to stimulate the hawks as an antidote to the antidote.

The President is, by his definition, trying to fight the war with restraint and determination for as long as is necessary to obtain a negotiated settlement that leaves South Vietnam independent of North Vietnam. What his "middle-of-the-road" policy has shown, however, is that he is willing to accept a lot more war to win his goal than most of the public, hawk or dove. The President apparently has been slow to grasp the significance of the fact that, hawk or dove, those who differ with his policy share a common objective – to get out soon – and a common impatience with the way things are going. What the testimony of the generals and admirals did not deny, and what the testimony of McNamara made explicit, is that there is not much chance that "a less discriminating bombing campaign" (McNamara's phrase) will of itself break Hanoi's will to continue the war, and no chance that more bombing – short of obliterating North Vietnam's cities and government – can "win" the war. And one interesting result of the bombing hearings has been to turn some despairing hawks into doves.

Sen. Stuart Symington (D, Mo.), a former Secretary of the Air Force and an unabashed believer in airpower, was moved by McNamara's testimony to declare that "if the position as presented by the Secretary this morning is right, I believe the United States should get out of Vietnam at the earliest possible time, and on the best possible basis; because with his premises, there would appear no chance for any true 'success' in this long war." Although the senator later hedged his views, the logic of his statement seems likely to seize more and more hawks. As they change their feathers, the President may find that he is no longer in the middle of the road, but out on the end of a limb all by himself, marked as a sacrificial bird. There is in this prospect a sad paradox. For Hanoi is not very likely to negotiate a settlement as long as it thinks President Johnson will be repudiated in 1968 – even if he stops the bombing. And the farther off negotiations appear to be, the more likely it is that the President will continue to bomb.

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Unpolished Nigger

The City of New York's Department of Health poster, No. 50M-4/61-504028(61), begins: *"Don't Let A Rat Kill Your Baby.* Keep Your House Clean. Keep Your Garbage Pail Tightly Covered. Keep Your Food In Covered Jars or Cans. Keep Your Baby's Crib Clean." The poster ends its warning in big red letters: "RATS FOLLOW THE SMELL OF MILK. WATCH YOUR BABY BEFORE PUTTING HIM TO BED. WATCH HIM AFTERWARD."

Entering a darkened Harlem hallway behind Jesse Gray, you can see this warning as you climb the crooked, warped stairs to the cracked, peeling doors where mothers are yelling, children wailing, and the smell of living is everywhere. Jesse Gray comes directly from the nerve ends of the poor. To follow him on his rounds is to understand that a falling off of outrage is the beginning of paralysis.

Compared to Sargent Shriver, who wants to fire Gray from federal anti-poverty work, Gray's public relations image is awful. Even his days of mass media glory are against Gray, for people tend to forget his rent-strike victory and to wrongly remember he was defying the law. The law was on the books. They forget that Gray awakened a surprisingly large number of the paralyzed poor to defend themselves, and that his strike inspired college students to seek him out to offer their active support. In a city where landlords eagerly go to court because the courts are notoriously in their favor, the rent-strike victories were a triumph of human rights over property rights.

Gray is inclined to be suspicious, cantankerous, restless, unpunctual, and his inflammatory statements, coming out of ill-set teeth, are as direct as a punch in the nose. But when he walks down his streets, which are crowded with the unemployed of three generations, his unimposing, medium-sized figure is greeted with an unusually high degree of respect. It is not unusual for a mother to approach the unassuming Gray and say, "Good afternoon, Mr. Gray." Working out of his store – the Community Council on Housing – with an A. Philip Randolph award on the wall and a cardboard chart listing donations of two cents and five cents, Gray is in the thick of the ghetto current. By the time the best-intentioned city machinery gets to the guts of Harlem, it has broken down. Gray then takes up the emergency job of getting the people back in contact with their city.

One event is typical. A middle-aged mother of two, living through the winter in a tenement without heat, became sick. She sent her children to a neighbor and went to the clinic where she was hospitalized with pneumonia. Because there was no heat in the building, she had withheld her rent. When she returned from the hospital, not yet fully recovered, her belongings were on the street, her furniture sold for back rent, and her flat padlocked. Gray was found while making his round and he set the legal machinery going to open up the sick woman's door and get her furniture back. Mutterings of violence against the landlord, and threats of emptying the house and burning it to the ground, were heard around him.

To hear Gray on the phone trying to get through to a city agency is to give up on the telephone as a form of communication. Whether by ignorance, incompetence or design, city employees have just to hear him mention his name and clearly state his problem and the official he wants to see, and he is connected to the wrong party. After minutes of waiting, switching and repeating the nature of his call, the call becomes hopelessly enmeshed in a tangle of false leads and the rest of the time is devoted to trying to get the call back to the switchboard operator where he started.

The woman Gray helped didn't have to travel to a strange office or drain her energy among hostile bureaucrats. The woman remained in her neighborhood and was consoled by friends. Her flat was opened to her and her furniture was eventually restored.

"Jesse in Congress?" A veteran black activist grinned joyously at the thought of Gray being the logical successor to Adam Clayton Powell. "That would be *sweet* revenge. Yea, if they thought they had a tiger by the tail in Adam, they'll hear the whole damn roar of the ghetto when Jesse gets there. But will he ever? Jesse's trouble is that he's an unpolished nigger. How're you going to sell that to Adam's churchgoing, black bourgeoisie?"

One way, of course, would have been for Shriver to fire him. Gray dared to confront congressmen with a live rat he brought down from Harlem. It was outrageous publicity to a man with the gentlemanly bearing of Shriver, who has to coax and cajole his anti-poverty opponents. But in Harlem, and even to the city's Department of Health, the reality Gray took with him to Washington is all too clear every night.

Morris Renek

Again the Huks

A favorite argument for being in Vietnam is that if we don't halt communism there it will spread elsewhere in Asia. In fact, communism doesn't spread from one locus but is born wherever greed and stupidity couple. A case in point is the Philippines, where the communistic "Huks" are regaining strength. Land reform decrees theoretically altered crop shares to benefit peasants, but tenants who take landlords to court under the Land Reform Code tend to end up dead. One widow said bitterly, "If my husband hadn't gone to law he'd

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be alive." The police did nothing about that murder, but the Huks did; they executed the man's landlord. Through such rough justice, the Huks are regaining ground in Central Luzon and elsewhere.

Many of the hated landlords are absentee owners who live in Manila on very good terms with the American business community there. (Just as most of South Vietnam's wealthy landowners live in Saigon.) Many of them are sugar barons; sugar is excluded from the land reforms. The Filipino sugar barons get a bigger quota from this country than any other sugar growers in the world. In effect, the American taxpayer is paying the Filipino sugar lords to keep their estates free of land reform. Sugar is the Philippines' big foreign-exchange earner. On the other hand, the peasants who toil on the sugar estates are the most exploited and their masters are the landlords with least social conscience. Also, the Philippines lose foreign exchange by having to import rice, though there is no good reason why they can't grow more than enough to feed themselves. One key to higher rice yields is irrigation; the US helps with technical assistance and loans. But there is no guarantee that this US aid benefits small farmers. There cannot be, until land reform in the Philippines is made as effective as it has proved in Taiwan and Japan. If that were the price tag on our aid, we would earn the gratitude of the peasants. As things are, the peasants identify the United States with the sugar barons and other powerful landlords – and once more look for succor to the Huks, just as though Magsaysay had never lived.

Facade in Brazil

Once pictured as an angry land on the brink of violent upheaval, northeast Brazil is being hailed by Brazilian businessmen, politicians and publicists, and by US officials, as a model for economic development. An extensive program of industrialization has begun. The large US Agency for International Development mission in Recife, the region's key city, has been directing a flow of funds and technical assistance under the Alliance for Progress. But Brazilian and US efforts have created no more than a facade over the massive poverty and backwardness of the region. Political stability derives from the regressive grip of the Brazilian army. Liberal and radical dissidents, especially on the Catholic left, bitterly identify US policy with preservation of the status quo.

The device used to bring new industry to the region is a tax incentive borrowed from the Italians, who used it to industrialize southern Italy. A company doing business in Brazil may retain 50 percent of its annual tax, for investment in the northeast. New industries thus far created under this law will provide more than 80,000 new jobs. Nevertheless, in Recife and its suburbs, with a population of 1.2 million, about half the available work force lacks steady employment. The northeast as a whole contains around 26 million people, most of them young and increasing at an ominous rate. The new industries have not been soaking up much of this vast pool of untrained manpower. They are utilizing modern technology and require a few highly skilled workers.

The new capital is not a force for reform. The Fourth Army, with headquarters in Recife, has the last word in all matters of importance. Employers take advantage of this climate to pay less than the legal minimum wage of $30 a month in Recife. Following the 1964 military coup, the army removed the leaders from virtually all the labor unions on the ground that they were communists. Most of the unions are controlled by management and intimidated by the military. To suggest a strike would invite the charge of "agitation." Troublesome employees can always be replaced.

The politicians who have nominal control over the states and municipalities govern in a parody of the democratic process. All are tied to the handful of close-knit family groups which dominate the region. There are such travesties as the mayor's relocation of 300 shanty-dwelling families from a river bank near the center of Recife to a little valley behind the airport on the edge of town, leaving them out of sight, cut off from access to the city, without means of livelihood.

The only voice of protest the military have not been able to silence is Dom Helder Camara, Archbishop of Recife. Dom Helder and his supporters see the US as the major prop of Brazil's military government. According to the archbishop, "The United States says it wants basic reforms, but if any Latin nation tries to use its own head or walk on its own feet, the United States will intervene."

In northeast Brazil, the "industrialization-plus-stability" formula has made the rich richer, the poor poorer, and those who are aware more bitter.

Joseph Page

Alliance Without Progress

A Brazilian joke says: "The Alliance for Progress must be succeeding; we're getting a better class of dictator." Six years after the signing of the Charter of Punta del Este, cynicism about the Alliance is common throughout Latin America. In the United States, apparent failure to achieve the goals of the Alliance has led to congressional slashes in funds for the program despite promises of a Latin American Common Market being in "substantial operation" by 1985.

The United States has spent or earmarked $6.5-billion for the program. As envisioned by President

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Kennedy, the Alliance was to be a 10-year plan and the Latins would receive $20 billion in aid in exchange for basic social reforms. In fact, the rate of economic growth in Latin America has gone on dropping sharply, and a large proportion of the aid has gone to prop up military governments that overthrew constitutional regimes and have deprived citizens of their rights.

Per capita growth rate dropped from 2.4 percent during 1950-1955, to 1.9 percent from 1955 to 1960, to 1.5 percent from 1960 to 1965. Last year, the rate was only 1.1 percent. The Inter-American Development Bank reports that "1966 did not bring significant improvement in the pattern of land distribution and tenure in most Latin American countries," that "Latin America has not benefited from the vigorous increase in world trade," and "the unfavorable position is partly due to unsuccessful policies and even a lack of policies."

Kennedy spoke of mobilizing Latin American resources, and extending public and private assistance from the United States, in order to mount a concentrated attack on poverty, while at the same time reforming the social structure to show the masses that change is possible without revolutionary violence. Instead, labor unions, for example in Argentina and Brazil, have been crippled or destroyed by the dictatorships.

The six years of the Alliance have been marked by choice of "showcase" countries to indicate what could be done. Each "showcase" promptly cracked. Thus, Colombia was selected because of then President Alberto Lleras Camargo's loyalty to the ideals of the Alliance, and the lip service that was given to planning. By 1965 – $370 million later – officials were saying, "it is not that the plan broke down, it has never been put into practice." President Carlos Lleras Restropo's program is now similarly bogging down.

To many, the Alliance is just an anti-communist program to prevent Fidel Castro getting a hold on the mainland.

Despite its reputation for frequent and violent change, Latin America has resisted change for more than a century. So long as the old colonial structure and Washington's policy of business as usual prevail, the Alliance lacks meaning. NATHAN MILLER

Tennessee Rebels

Nashville

George Washington Ware, a soft-spoken but militant black power advocate and close confidant of Stokely Carmichael, addressed a small gathering of Negro students attending the controversial Nashville Liberation School August 21. Next day he was arrested on charges of sedition and jailed under $5,000 bond. Although reporters were not allowed within hearing distance while the "lecture" was in progress, and talked with the 27-year-old SNCC field worker only briefly after the class, two local attorneys read a newspaper account of Ware's appearance and decided he had gone far enough. State Rep. Charles Galbreath, a member of the Middle Tennessee chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Jack Kershaw, a former official of the (white) Citizens Council, swore out a citizen's warrant and had him picked up. Charges were dropped a week later when the Davidson County grand jury met and reported without indictment. Even as the Davidson County grand jury began considering the case August 28, his lawyers – joined now by noted ACLU leader William Kuntsler of New York – filed a complaint in federal district court to have the Tennessee sedition law declared unconstitutional.

With the case still pending, Ware met with newsmen to explain his actions and answer questions regarding the black power rebellion and the role of violence in the neo-civil rights movement. Only the sudden violence of guns and riots, he said, is condemned by white society; but oppression kills and destroys just as surely as a Molotov cocktail. The killing in Detroit, he said, was but a "violent reaction to violence."

"When a child dies in a Harlem hospital from malnutrition, that is violence just as real as when a kid throws a Molotov cocktail. What do you do with a system that will not allow a kid to get an education?" he asked. "That is still violence. . . it strips a man of his rights and robs him of his potential."

Ware, campus organizer for SNCC, was charged last April with inciting the riots that shook the campuses of Fisk and Tennessee A&I universities. A federal suit was filed to enjoin prosecution in the case, but both the ruling and charges are pending. Although he remains in the background to Carmichael and H. Rap Brown, Ware is one of the most articulate and effective SNCC workers. He has been connected with the Liberation School since it started almost nine months ago.

The school was pushed into a national controversy when Nashville Police Capt. John Sorace testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that the classes were promoting "pure, unadulterated hatred." The project was dropped from the anti-poverty program and forced out of St. Anselm's Episcopal Student Center on the Fisk campus. Leaders of the project, however, decided to continue the classes in a public park. Mrs. James Woodruff, the young, attractive wife of the rector at St. Anselm's, delivered a lecture on a bloody slave rebellion led by Nat Turner over a century ago. Turner and his followers were executed after killing over 50 white slave-owners. Supervised by SNCC field worker Fred Brooks, the elementary schoolchildren reenacted the massacre while white reporters looked on. In this atmosphere, Ware returned to Nash-

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ville after accompanying Stokely Carmichael to Cuba.

Did the school teach racial hatred? I sat in on the classes for two days and talked with most of the people behind the scenes, and I don't think so. But Cecil Wray, a member of the Metropolitan Action Commission, Nashville's anti-poverty agency, perhaps was right when he said the students were being taught things that "will inevitably lead to hate." The children were confronted each day with a picture of slain Black Muslim leader Malcolm X, which hangs on a wall cluttered with black power posters. They were told of W.E.B. Du Bois and his lifelong struggle to better the lot of black people around the world. They were taught a vivid history of the American Negro, his years in formal servitude and his seemingly futile fight for equality in American society.

During one class, a 14-year-old boy who sat facing the altar at St. Anselm's declared it would be all right to have white slaves. The teacher, a political science major at Fisk and not a SNCC member, corrected him. "Slavery is wrong. Period," he said. "Oppression is wrong. Period. Now, if you're going to learn to hate whites, then they're not wrong for hating you."

Wray referred to a school text which describes the slaughter of 300 Negroes at Ft. Pillow prison during the Civil War. The massacre at Ft. Pillow is a fact, even as Nat Turner's rebellion is a fact. American history from the Negro's point of view is certainly no basis for love – but neither does a ghetto present an atmosphere for racial understanding. The Negro can walk down any street and learn to hate the white man, and he can always find a brick to make it known. At the Liberation School, the ghetto children were given an access to their heritage and a vent for their despair. "The purpose of the school is to eliminate in the minds of Negroes those structures that lead to negative thinking about themselves," said the Reverend Woodruff. "The school is not closed to whites but it is geared toward the Negro problem."

The students were divided into two groups according to age. For about an hour each morning they attended classes, then spent the rest of the day at games and recreation. Only two SNCC members served as teachers. One, Delano B. Farrar, a college student from Boston, taught a class of younger children the philosophy behind the Deacons for Defense and the notorious Black Panthers of California, both armed and militant vigilante groups. He showed the students photographs of the Birmingham church bombing which killed five young Negro girls, and of Negro lynchings and burning crosses.

"What would you do if the whites rode through your neighborhood shooting at you and throwing rocks at you?" he asked.

A boy of about 11 years answered that he would "shoot back." Another said he would rather "run and hide." Farrar concluded that neither reaction would be wrong, that it might indeed be wise to run and hide and organize and then "shoot back."

"The purpose is not to hound the whites," he reminded, "but to protect our own community – from the Ku Klux Klan or the white cops."

In the class for older students – most of them in junior high school – the discussion ranged from the war in Vietnam to the riots in Detroit. William Brown, a student at Fisk, had charge of the class. His lecture was on Du Bois and the early days of the NAACP.

"Do you love your country?" one of the assistant teachers asked during a discussion.

"I'm not exactly crazy about it," quipped a boy as the other students laughed.

"Do you hate the trees and flowers?" the teacher probed.

"No," he replied.

"Does it mean you don't love your country if you don't like being pushed around? Can't you love your country and hate the system?"

When the war in Vietnam was discussed, Brown asked: "Who is the enemy to this country? Have we ever had any trouble with the Vietnamese? If you all believed your country was in danger, then you'd have to go and fight." Such was the case, he said, in World War II. Fighting is sometimes justified, sometimes necessary – and it is a question a free man decides for himself.

Rebellion is taught in the liberation school. Not a call to arms, or even to riot, but to demand and impose. The rebel, according to French existentialist Albert Camus, exists after resentment and envy are dead and a man decides he can take no more and stands up to "defend what he is."

"The rebel . . . from his very first step," says Camus, "refuses to allow anyone to touch what he is. He is fighting for the integrity of one part of his being. He does not try, primarily, to conquer, but simply to impose. . . . [He] limits himself, as a matter of principle, to refusing to be humiliated, without asking that others should be."

Ware says the Negro rebellion does not admit hatred of whites. "We recognize that it does no good to launch an attack of fury against a mass of people. We can trace the oppression of black people in this country to a system which does not allow them to move, which does not allow them to develop. I say that 22 million black people will not be able to create enough Rockefellers and Carnegies so that we can have the same things that the white community has. The change has to be more radical than that. Even if it goes through legal channels, it's still going to have to be radical and fundamental change, in terms of relationships of the white community and the black community."

LIVINGSTON JACKSON

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The Politics of Consortium

by Michael Miles

Many Americans were inconvenienced by the late riots. A Grosse Pointe matron who was unable to pick up her ticket to Europe from a downtown Detroit travel bureau decided to drive to California instead. The national political parties viewed downtown Chicago or San Francisco with reserve and favored easily defensible Miami Beach for their '68 conventions. Some congressmen demanded police reinforcements for Capitol Hill. And President Johnson had to appoint a riot panel.

Of greater import is the Urban Coalition, which has *Time* on its side, not to mention General Electric, Chase Manhattan, and Ford. Also endorsed by labor, civil rights, and municipal leaders, the coalition aims to "reorder national priorities." This does not mean it opposes war expenditures but that it favors an *additional* $4 billion outlay to create a million jobs in "meaningful public service" for slum denizens. Contemplating a $29 billion deficit, a ten percent tax surcharge, and congressional opposition to its modest urban program, the Administration views the coalition's proposal with distaste.

But establishmentarians have "seen the light by the burning fires," coalition advocates maintain. The Chase Manhattan Bank meantime, whose president David Rockefeller is on the coalition's steering committee, has told a foundation not to invest several million dollars in Harlem. One of Chase's officers said that the "bank is not recommending mortgage loans and investments in cities of potentially riotous conditions." For his part, President Johnson is mainly interested in his war, although he also hankers after his reelection in 1968, a condition of which is some degree of domestic tranquility.

The solution lies in a joint venture of private enterprise and government – a consortium – which reconciles one partner's taste for profit with the other's taste for war. There is a potential $50-billion market in rebuilding the slums, which could incidentally generate a million jobs. A housing credit gap separates the poor who are unable to pay for good housing from investors loath to take a risk. It might not cost much for the federal government to close the gap by subsidizing the interest rates that the poor pay for home loans, and guaranteeing the loans made by financial institutions; especially if corporations with large capital resources, like General Electric, US Gypsum and Litton Industries reduced building costs by prefabrication and other techniques.

The federal contribution would be "seed money" and the resulting leverage might generate five dollars of private investment for every federal dollar. Therefore in this way the Administration could conceivably face up to the urban crisis without disturbing its other political priorities. Johnson could replace consensus politics, dependent in some measure on unreliables and irresponsibles such as students, Negroes, and the man in the street, with a consortium politics of big government, big business, and big labor entwined in the blissful embrace of common interest. In the name of the free enterprise system, the consortium could move into one of the remaining areas where free enterprise actually operates, though ever so inefficiently – the construction industry. Just as development costs are paid and markets assured by the federal government in the space and defense industries, so the "cities industry" might benefit from loan guarantees and even from special tax breaks, *i.e.* subsidies. The poor would benefit while a better integrated power elite profited. In Washington, this is called "Creative Federalism."

President Johnson has appointed the president of Litton Industries to his "Commission on Civil Disorders" and the chairman of US Gypsum to the Kaiser Commission (which will probably make a slum rebuilding recommendation some time in December). The Urban Coalition could be useful to him in creating a political constituency for a slum rebuilding program, if his political opponents do not use it as a forum against him first. Newspapers reported "implied criticism" of the President in the coalition's August convocation, while he is said to have telephoned Mayor Lindsay the morning of the latter's keynote address. Arguing that it represented a "conflict of interest" with the riot commission of which Mayor Lindsay is also a member, President Johnson reportedly asked Lindsay to cancel the speech. Lindsay offered to resign from the commission. The President deferred to the mayor.

In consortium politics, there are problems. For one, the building trades are grossly discriminatory, which would embarrass a program designed to provide slum employment. The unions also support antiquated building codes whose specifications preclude prefabrication or other improvements in building technology. Nonetheless, the unions may come to accept the argu-

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ment that improved efficiency and equal opportunity would mean more, not fewer, jobs. More than half of the membership of several unions consists of men on the industrial side of building who would have nothing to lose by prefabrication and other such techniques. In Pittsburgh, the building trades have actually come around on the discrimination and building code issues. Presumably to induce similar commitment, Mr. Johnson has appointed AFL-CIO leader George Meany, who is also an old building trades man, and Joseph Keenan, president of the International Electrical Workers, to the Kaiser Commission. As members of the steering committee of the Urban Coalition, these two have given verbal commitments to support equal opportunity and modernized building codes.

A Good Trick

But the President's major problem is politics *per se* (alternatively spelled *per cy*). Once upon a time, he could have had the private sector all to himself. A design for a national Urban Development Corporation was originated last year at a conference of housing experts at Woods Hole, Mass. But because of some technical deficiencies in the concept and perhaps also because of presidential pique at a news leak, the idea was never presented to Congress. Now Governor Nelson Rockefeller, who leads Johnson in presidential polls, has proposed his own Urban Development Corporation in New York. The essential concept of it is Hortense Gabel's, former commissioner of rent and rehabilitation in New York City. If it materializes (PR is one of the art forms of consortium politics), it will be capitalized at $50 million. Johnson must now rely on his Kaiser Commission to develop a program sufficiently original to differentiate it from the Rockefeller program. This would be a good trick, because Miss Gabel also helped to design Johnson's original program.

In the Senate, Johnson must contend with Robert Kennedy and his shadow cabinet who have their own slum rebuilding proposal based on tax incentives to big business. In anticipation of the hearing of the bill before the Finance Committee, President Johnson has organized a task force with the specific purpose, according to the *Wall St. Journal*, of discrediting the proposal. Senator Percy also recently introduced his famous homeowner's bill. Unanimously backed by the Republicans in the Senate, this proposal was scotched in committee and an Administration alternative substituted for it.

It is to the credit of the Percy bill that it took cognizance of what is naturally ignored in consortium politics – the poor people themselves. In particular the bill allows for community corporations which residents might democratically control on a one-man, one-vote basis. Such nonprofit corporations qualified as "eligible borrowers" in the Percy bill, and would have had a ready source of financing through the provision of a national homeowners foundation (which, however, would be controlled by fat cats). Still, the people themselves might have obtained a large measure of control over the planning and design of any development schemes in their neighborhood.

There is no evidence of presidential concern for community control of ghetto development. The Administration's alternative to the Percy homeowners' proposal would channel interest rate subsidies through the HUD and FHA bureaucracies, with no provision for community control of builders. The first proposal of the Kaiser Commission (eventually, it is likely to propose a massive consortium scheme) was transfer of the management of public housing to private firms, that is, change of an inefficient for an efficient overseer of the poor. And when Senator Ribicoff proposed a Neighborhood Development Corporation bill, it was necessary to concede effective City Hall veto over the operation of such corporations to mollify HUD, which in the end opposed the bill anyway.

Thus, there is slight chance of community corporations controlling neighborhood development, should business and government decide to enter the field in a big way. The community corporation is too experimental, according to the lights of business and government. For this reason, the experience of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, sponsored by Senator Kennedy of New York, may prove crucial. It is the only extant community corporation which is designed to combine popular control and massive input of private capital. Although not benefitting from any government program of interest subsidies or loan guarantees, the restoration corporation will use government and foundation grants for a "seed money" program of its own. The Bedford-Stuyvesant project has had its troubles, but it now has $8 million in grant money to work with, and also the support of some of the militant factions. Heretofore, the corporation's board of directors has not been democratically elected. But CORE's Sunny Carson has agreed to join the board on the condition (conceded by chairman Thomas Jones) that the board be democratically elected once the corporation gets rolling. Unlike Kennedy's Senate bills, which subsidize private industry while providing only a modicum of community control (Tenant Management Corporations), the Bedford-Stuyvesant project offers the prospect of popular control of the development process itself.

But the Bedford-Stuyvesant model is unlikely to be implemented on a national scale. The time is out of joint and there is precious little of it remaining before the '68 election. President Johnson must take some action to prevent riots in an election year, while sustain-

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ing the Vietnam war. The natural solution is an alliance of big business and government which would clean up the ghettos while lining up the "responsible leadership" of the international corporations behind Johnson. For the Administration to support community corporations would only serve to alienate the middle-class leadership of the municipalities. Thus a unique historical opportunity may be foreclosed. Community corporations may continue to exist in odd corners but be excluded from the initial determination of the social design and the institutional shape of the ghetto. This would be sad. Although they might be captured by their capital sources or by their technical advisors or by local con artists, community corporations are the only thing in sight that might empower black and poor people. An even more distant speck on the horizon – perhaps a sail or perhaps only a piece of driftwood – is the possibility of such corporations serving as an agency of social change for the entire society. Insofar as they are new, quasi-governmental, democratically structured institutions, community corporations have subversive promise. As Milton Kotler, who developed the concept, has said, "Technology has never been a substitute for political freedom and liberty." By functioning as an intermediate association between the individual and the monster bureaucracies, the community corporation might revive the Rousseauist model of a democracy of vigorous, responsible citizens. In the process, it might redeem the promises made in this country almost two hundred years ago.

Blackballing The Fiedlers

Shortly after his arrest on a misdemeanor narcotics charge (the rarely enforced statute against anyone who "opens or maintains a place or places where any narcotic drug is unlawfully used"), Leslie A. Fiedler, who doesn't use, sell or donate marijuana, was notified by the Traveler's Indemnity Company that his homeowner's policy was being cancelled. There was no explanation, just the simple statement that his account was not wanted, along with another statement informing him that should he fail to get another policy within ten days, the Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company might foreclose his mortgage. Fiedler reinsured the house with the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company, which, a few weeks later, also cancelled out without explanation.

The Fiedlers realized the first cancellation was perhaps not so gratuitous as they had thought, so they went to an independent insurance agent and requested that he get them a policy with a company that knew the facts – that Fiedler, professor of English at the State University of New York at Buffalo, had been accused of a misdemeanor – and that would insure. The agent was encouraging and the Fiedlers relaxed a bit. On the ninth day of the ten-day period, Margaret Fiedler tried to find out what the agent had accomplished, but each time she called, the agent's secretary told her he had just stepped out and would call back in a few minutes. He never called and, in desperation, Margaret phoned the mortgage department at the bank to explain. The bank did the explaining: the agent had called the *bank* the day *before* and said he hadn't obtained the policy, so the next move was up to the bank. Late in the tenth day Margaret was given a binder by Allstate, the insurance firm owned by Sears. Two weeks later (August 16), the Fiedlers received a refund from the Rochester regional Allstate office, and a note that said, "All insurance companies have certain qualifying standards which, together with our judgment and experience, tell us whether we can provide insurance in each individual case. Risks that can be insured by one company might not meet the standards of another company.

"Sometimes, because of these standards, we must give up business we would otherwise like to have. This happens only after thorough consideration is given each case.

"We're sorry we won't be able to accept your application for insurance protection . . .

"As you see, a period of time remains before your protection stops. This will allow you time to apply for similar insurance elsewhere. We urge you to do so. Then you won't run the risk of being without protection.

"Thank you for your friendly interest in Allstate."

The Allstate agent knew quite well the Fiedlers did not want to "run the risk of being without protection" (which is why they applied in the first place) and that without such insurance they would lose their house (Congress has guaranteed most veterans the right to a home loan, but it has left the veto power in the hands of the insurance companies); he knew also that they had been blackballed and *no* regular American insurance company would handle their account. This is like Boston's Louise Day Hicks telling Roxbury Negroes that education will solve their problems while her school committee maintains in Roxbury the worst schools in the state.

Who rolled the blackball? Conversation around the university focused on three possibilities: (1) the Buffalo Police Department resorted to extralegal pressures in the hope of running Fiedler out of town; (2) Fiedler's bank, perhaps pressured by some outraged local Brahmin, requested each insurance company in turn to reject Fiedler's policy; or (3) some of Fiedler's neighbors in Buffalo's comfortable Franklin Park section ($25,-

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000-$50,000 homes, only recently invaded by professors) complained to their own insurance companies, and through them effected the blackball. Investigation by friends of the university has pretty much ruled out the second possibility: the bank seems sincerely interested in getting the Fiedlers insured and the problem settled; the first and third possibilities, neither mutually exclusive, are both still talked about.

There did not, until very recently, seem to be any recourse. Household insurance agreements are terminable at the will of either party and, as with moving companies, there is little government protection for the consumer except in cases of demonstrable fraud. It has been reported that a few days ago the home office of Allstate, when queried about its acceptance of the blackball, agreed to instruct its local agents to reinstate the policy.

But even if the insurance problem is resolved there are other, continuing aspects to the campaign that is being waged against the Fiedlers. The arrest has broad connotations for a town that still cannot accept the major university that now occupies the buildings and land which only a few years ago housed a homey, familiar, socially and intellectually innocuous diploma mill, and also cannot accept the strange clothes, the occasional beards, the iconoclastic entertainments (the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Ginsberg, *MacBird*, etc.), the out-of-town accents.

Target of Hate Mail

The puzzlement and outrage manifest themselves most directly in hate mail. Last year, university president Martin Meyerson was the object of much of it; this year Fiedler is the target. Like the following: "Having read the expansive article concerning you and your activities, 'On Being Busted at Fifty,' which appeared first in the *New York Review of Books* and was reprinted by the Buffalo *Evening News* there seems one logical avenue – *Return to the land of your ancestors*, taking Dr. Myerson [*sic*] for moral support, as well as Leary. Our taxes might then be diverted into *sounder areas of need*. [Signed] Concerned Tax-Payer, Logical Parent, Clear minded individual able to 'get along' without hallucinations in a busy world." Or this one (printed in block letters and unsigned): ". . . You [*i.e.*, the UB faculty] are a bunch of the hated Jewish and commie rat nest. Its the 2nd best in the US after the Red nest – U of Cal at Berkeley. And its hero Meyerson when he was thrown out there. Who in hell got him here? . . . How come that leftie rats and poisoners of young minds remain at UB. Why don't you all go to stinking Russia. Or the damned hated Israel? . . ."

A few of Fiedler's respectable middle-class neighbors have joined the assault. A friend of mine was walking by the Fiedler house and noticed a group of neighborhood children, who ranged in age from about 8 to 10, standing before the house shouting and throwing papers and bottles on the lawn. She was at first surprised (she lives in the neighborhood and knew the children to be generally well behaved), then shocked when she realized the parents of the children were standing across the street, calmly watching. "Those kids don't read newspapers," she said to me, "and I know they didn't think up that lawn littering by themselves." A few neighbors have remained friendly, or at least civil (one became friendly for the first time only after the harassment began), but others now refuse to say hello or even nod when they pass the Fiedlers on the street.

It isn't only the police, the cranks, the neighbors and the insurance cartel. Someone persuaded the University of Amsterdam, where Fiedler was supposed to go next month on a Fulbright, to withdraw its previously confirmed invitation. Fiedler was not even accorded the courtesy of a direct letter from that university, but instead was informed thirdhand by an official in the American Fulbright Commission (which disagreed with the Dutch action and has tried, without success, to set things aright). Fiedler wrote the rector of the University of Amsterdam, inquiring about the report he received and asking why they reneged on his appointment. In his reply the rector vaguely alluded to proceedings "in progress" and said, "Personally I may add that I read one of your articles on the narcotic problem and personal freedom, which impressed me very much and which I thought straight-forward. I certainly will welcome an opportunity to meet you personally." He knows that it is now probably too late for the Fulbright Commission to get Fiedler an appointment elsewhere in Europe for this fall, and, the academic world working the way it does, this means Fiedler may have several months without a position. The rector never communicated with any official of this university about Fiedler's status (which is unchanged, since he is not convicted of any crime). There is a movement beginning to boycott the Netherlands as a Fulbright location.

The financial burden on the Fiedlers is considerable (some contributions have arrived for the defense fund, but not nearly enough), but at least there is a mechanism for defense against the legal charge. But against the other attacks there is no defense. Neighbors and strangers, bigots and xenophobes, a Dutch university and several of the unassailable American insurance companies have proclaimed Fiedler guilty, whether he is guilty or not.

BRUCE JACKSON

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Teaching Children to Think

by Joseph Featherstone

Discontented people in Britain sometimes make polemical use of an imaginary land called America, where everything is democratic and efficient. My purpose in these reports is not to create a rival, equally useless myth for the comfort of disheartened educators on this side of the Atlantic. There is nothing utopian about the good British schools described in these reports. Teachers are, by American standards, underpaid (salaries start at $30 a week). The turnover in staff is ferocious, and schools receive pittances for buying equipment and books. All over, teaching is often a flat business, and always a tough one. It is of immense practical significance that in the flat, tough world of overworked teachers and daily routines, substantial numbers of British primary schools are organizing their classrooms in a way that really does promote individual learning, that allows children to develop at their own pace in the crucial, early years of school.

As samples of the kind of learning that goes on, I've described how children learn to read and write, and the careful way in which they are introduced to mathematics. These methods, I've indicated, are successful in fairly measurable, as well as other, terms. They are not guaranteed to make bad teachers, or people who dislike children, into good teachers. But they are more suited than formal methods to the nature of small children and to the kinds of subjects that should be taught in primary school; and they encourage many ordinary teachers, who find that they are happier using them and less likely to spend all their time worrying about keeping order. Such methods assume that children can respond to courteous treatment by adults, and that to a great extent they can be trained to take the initiative in learning, if choices are real, and if a rich variety of material is offered them. As the Plowden Report concedes, these assumptions are not true for all children (some will probably always benefit more from formal teaching) or for every child all of the time. But the Plowden Report is itself testimony to a growing conviction in Britain that they can be a workable basis for an entire nation's schools.

Are they a workable basis for American schools? The task of creating American schools along these lines will be formidable, to say the very least. This is not the place to rehearse the institutional and cultural obstacles to change in American education, but I do want to anticipate some of the most serious questions that many people will raise about the kinds of schools I've described. In reform, as in anything else, there must be priorities, and in this case the first stark priority is simply to see clearly.

One thing that troubles some Americans about these schools is discipline. They may acknowledge that good British schools are doing better work than good American schools, but they are reluctant to admit that the results stem from, among other things, giving children freedom to choose from among selected activities in the classroom, and to move around the room, talking to each other. If they are teachers, they may react to such a proposition with contempt, because they know how hard it is to maintain discipline in many American classrooms. Where the class is taught as a unit, and every child is supposed to pay attention as the teacher talks, discipline can be a serious matter; it is even more of a problem when the class splits into groups for reading out loud, as any first-grade teacher knows. Quick children get restless; slow children dread the ordeal, and act accordingly. Any teacher who can keep good order under the circumstances, has a certain amount of talent, however wasted. Tony Kallet, a perceptive American now working as an adviser in Leicestershire, has written of the difficulties in maintaining control of the class in the good, but very formal American school in which he apprenticed. Some children managed quite well, he recalls, but others, especially the "problem children," found the discipline too much, too little was permitted them, and "their problems were, in part, being created, rather than mitigated by control." After working with English classes, he felt very different about the problem, but for all the time he was in an American classroom, "it did truly seem that every single control imposed was necessary if anything was to be accomplished," a view that many American teachers will understand.

Some American teachers who have seen the spectacle of children in British classes working diligently on their own have raised another question: they have wondered whether British children are fundamentally different from American children. Certainly British grown-ups are different from Americans, and there may well be important differences in national character. Yet middle-aged English visitors to the informal schools often react with the same disbelief as Americans: they find it hard to credit British children with so much initiative and so much responsibility. Also, formal schools in Britain suffer from discipline problems, so

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it is hard to know how to speculate intelligently on the question. American teachers working on their own – and how lonely they seem – have often succeeded with methods similar to those of the good British primary schools: a forthcoming book by Herbert Kohl describes a sixth-grade class in Harlem run along fairly free lines – he includes some extraordinarily powerful samples of the children's free writing. A British teacher from one of the good local authorities recently came over to a large American city to teach a demonstration class of 8- to 11-year-olds in a slum school. Before he went, he was assured – by Americans – he would find American children as different from British as day is from night. Yet, he reported, the children reacted exactly as English children to a classroom thoughtfully laid out to permit choices. At first, the American children couldn't believe he meant what he said. After a timid start, they began rushing around the room, trying to sample everything fast, as though time were going to run out on them. Then they "settled remarkably quickly to study in more depth and to explore their environment with interest and enthusiasm." The teacher noticed that for the first two weeks no one did any written English or math, and when he asked them why, they said they hated those subjects. Eventually he got more and more of the class interested in free writing, but he never could get them interested in mathematics.

Reassuring the Parents

Another, more serious, argument against this kind of education is that it won't prepare children for life. The answer the Plowden Report makes to this seems to me remarkably sensible: the best preparation for life is surely to live fully as a child. Sometimes this fear takes the reasonable form of a parent's question: will these informal methods handicap a child if he moves on to a school run on formal lines? This problem is now fairly common in England as children move from good infant schools to old-fashioned junior schools, or from informal primary school to rigid secondary school. I went to a parents' meeting at one superb infant school; the parents, who clearly were completely won over by the methods of the school, were nonetheless apprehensive of what could become of their children in a new situation. The head of the infant school said – which was true – that the children did in fact do very well in the very formal junior school. There was only one repeated complaint about them: they were not very good at sitting still for long periods of time. In general, it seemed clear that an ability to write and to really understand mathematics – to say nothing of an ability to work on their own – stand children in good stead, whatever school they attend later. Heads of good schools argue that children are more adaptable than most parents imagine – and one indication that the problem of switching from one school to another is not crucial is that most heads agree with the Plowden Report's recommendation for another year of the informal methods of infant school; with an extra year, most of them think, they could lick their remaining reading problems, and the transfers will be even easier.

Another pressing question that Americans ask about these methods is, oddly enough, historical in nature. It is said that these kinds of classes were tried out in the progressive era of American education, and found wanting. This is an example of a lesson drawn from history, one of those lessons we cling to tenaciously, and since nothing is so treacherous as our sense of recent history, it bears looking into. Progressive education, like the progressive movements in thought and politics, was woven from many different, often contradictory threads. It took place against a background of the great shift in the function of American secondary schools, which were changing from elite preparatory institutions to mass terminal institutions; just as in the 1950's, when our present picture of progressive education was firmly etched in the popular mind, many high schools were turning into mass college preparatory institutions. The radical attempt to give secondary education to the whole population was an important aspect of progressive education, just as the reaction against it was part of an era when nearly half the students in secondary school would go on to college.

As a movement, progressive education was, in part, a new concern for science brought to bear on society – in the schools this meant educational psychology, tests and the cult of research. Another element was the characteristic progressive concern with social reform: John Dewey's vain hope that the schools could in some way become centers for the continuous reconstruction of society. Another distinct, if sometimes related strand, was an emphasis on the individual growth and development of the child. This last, in particular, was reflected in the practices of a number of private schools in the 20's and 30's. Good and bad, these schools tended to see children through ideological lenses: they were followers of Freud, at least to the extent that they thought repression wicked, and some idealized children as participants in the artist's historic struggle against bourgeois society. The best of the "child-centered" private schools based much of their teaching on the idea that children come to understand the world through play; they tried to get students to take part in the running of the school, and they broke down the barriers dividing one subject from another, often making the community around them and its life part of the curriculum. These seem today the sound aspects of their work. The ideological

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emphasis on liberating the child seems, from today's perspective, less useful. In some schools, the energies of staff and children were wasted in testing the limits of permissible behavior, a procedure that was almost forced on the children by an abdication of adult authority. It is not strange that the abdication did not always result in freedom: in practice, freeing children from adult authority can mean exposing them to the tyranny of their peers, and eliminating "external" rules can mean setting up subtle and unacknowledged rules that are just as ruthless and, even worse, vague and arbitrary.

They Never Tried It

It is difficult to find much evidence that the classroom practices of the private schools stressing individual growth ever spread to the public schools. The emphasis of the private progressive schools on cooperation and adjustment to the group was shared by the public schools, but it took a different turn: the public schools practicing adjustment and "Americanization" were fulfilling one of the traditional roles of the American schools, taming objectionable outsiders, making sure that immigrants and lower class people didn't make trouble. The progressive movement in public education was deeply conservative, and was mainly reflected in reform of school administration, putting the operations of the schools more in line with the principles of scientific management espoused by Frederick Taylor and his disciples. (It says much about a misunderstood period that the idea of a school run as a business was much more powerful than the idea of the school as a model civic community, though of course social science, civics and other shattered fragments of John Dewey's dream did enter the curriculum, for better or worse.)

Thus in American public schools, with a few notable exceptions, what we call progressive education was never tried. Progressive education in practice meant secondary education for all, and, perhaps, more educational opportunity; more courses, especially in high school, of the life-adjustment variety; more emphasis on extracurricular activities; more grouping by ability and emphasis on testing; some "project work" that was no doubt a welcome relief from the textbooks; some more or less important changes in the textbooks themselves; reform in the management of the schools, often based on the inappropriate models from the world of business.

What wisps of the vision of education as individual growth trailed into the public schools were largely rhetorical. In their famous study of "Middletown" (Muncie, Indiana) in 1925, the Lynds described the classrooms: "immoveable seats in orderly rows fix the sphere of activity of each child. For all from the timid six-year-old . . . to the . . . high school senior . . . the general routine is much the same." When they returned to Middletown 10 years later, in 1935, "progressive education" had arrived. There was talk of growth, personality development, and creative self-expression: ". . . the aim of education should be to enable every child to become a useful citizen, to develop his individual powers to the fullest extent of which he is capable, while at the same time engaged in useful and lifelike activities." Along with the new rhetoric, the Lynds noted, went an increased emphasis on administration; there was no basic change in methods of teaching or classroom organization. Their report can stand as a paradigm of what progressive education amounted to in most American schools. Education that treats people as individuals had become a cliché without ever being reality.

There are clear parallels with the primary school revolution in Britain. It, too, is distantly tied to the changing role of the secondary schools, and certainly much of its rhetoric is reminiscent of the progressive education movement. British schools certainly share the concern with individual development of the good progressive schools. And yet the differences in the two movements are profound. Although there is an emphasis on cooperation in British schools, and children are encouraged to teach each other, there is no abdication of adult authority, and no belief that this would be desirable. The idea of giving children choices reflects ideology less than a considered judgment as to how they best learn. The teaching of mathematics, as I described in my second report, illustrates the extent to which these schools are intent on teaching children to think, and how little of what they do stems from an ideological interest in making children into social saviours or artistic rebels against bourgeois conventions, or whatever. It is this deep pedagogical seriousness, the attention paid to learning in the classroom, that makes the British primary school revolution so different from progressive education, which was all too often unconcerned with pedagogy.

This pedagogical focus and what it means can be seen in the way the informal British schools are solving the problem of grouping children into classes according to abilities – what the British call "streaming," and what we call "tracking." In both countries it is customary for larger schools to "track" students so that there are A, B, C, and sometimes D or E classes in a supposed order of ability and intelligence. (And within a class there are slow, average and fast reading groups.) On the whole, teachers in Britain and America favor the practice, and it is easy to see why. When you deal with the class as a unit, when learning is done by groups, it is certainly less grueling if the group is of roughly similar abilities, and, within the limits of conventional instruction, tracking does enable children

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to go at something closer to their own pace. Tracking, or streaming, is a heated subject now in Britain, as it is in this country. The spread of informal methods of teaching is calling its utility into question, and many of the schools run on freer lines are abandoning the practice. The Plowden Report, which clearly favors "unstreaming," cites a survey – the same survey I mentioned in my first report, discussing tested differences between formal and informal schools – suggesting that in terms of measurable achievement, children in tracked schools do slightly, but not much, better than children in informal schools where tracking has been abandoned. There are, as I suggested, reasons for discounting this – the fact that formal schools train children to take achievement tests, whereas informal ones teach more important things, and the evidence that the differences in test scores wane as the children grow older.

Branded as Stupid

In England, as in America, there are many reasons why a practical alternative to tracking would be desirable. Tracking in a primary school brands children as stupid at an early age, with profound and unhappy effects on them.

"I'll never forget the look on the faces of the boys in the lower stream," an East London junior school head told me. His school has successfully abolished the practice, but he is unable to forget the look completely: "I still see it when my boys in the lower streams of secondary modern school come back to visit." Tracking has a profound effect on teachers, too: it tempts them to think that a single pattern of instruction can apply to a whole class, and it increases the odds that they will deal with their children in terms of abstract categories, IQ or whatever. In England, as here, the upper tracks of a school tend to be middle class, which makes the school an instrument for reinforcing social inequality. In America, of course, tracking is commonly a means of maintaining segregation within a supposedly integrated school.

After watching British classes, another argument against tracking occurs to you: it ignores the extent to which children learn from each other, slow children learning from the quick, and the bright ones, in turn, learning from the role of teacher they adopt with the slow. This is most evident in the small number of schools that have adopted family, or vertical, grouping: where there is not only no grouping by ability, but no grouping by age, and every class contains a mixed bag of older and younger children. Yet while all this is true, it makes little sense to condemn tracking unless you can show teachers alternatives to formal classroom teaching. This is where the pedagogical bite of the primary school revolution is so impressive: when a British school today stops tracking, it is not simply returning to the past, it is shifting to a different definition of the roles of teacher and student, and setting up a new kind of classroom in which students are trained to do work independently. With the blessing of the Plowden Report, fewer and fewer infant schools track and it is increasingly common for junior schools to abandon tracking in the first two years, and in some cases in the third. How far this trend will carry depends on the impact the primary school revolution makes on the secondary schools. A survey in the Plowden Report shows that English teachers, who used to be overwhelmingly in favor of streaming as a general policy for primary schools, are coming to approve of unstreaming. The reason, clearly, is that they are beginning to see workable alternatives.

Tracking is regarded as a necessary evil in this country, as are IQ and standardized achievement tests, formal class teaching, specified curriculum materials, set hours for set subjects, fixed ages for entering school and being promoted and so on. Teachers and administrators often realize that children's intellectual and emotional growth varies just as widely as their physical growth, yet they seldom feel able to act on their understanding, to treat each child differently. The good British schools raise serious doubts as to whether these evils are in fact necessary. In this country, as in England, there is a growing, and on the whole healthy skepticism about education: people are questioning the standard methods of the schools, and they are becoming realistic about the limited extent to which any school can be expected to pick up the marbles for the rest of society. (One interpretation of last year's Coleman Report would be that it calls into question our standard techniques of education, in slums as well as suburbs.) No British teacher would claim that his methods could solve our deepest historical and social problems, but, as far as education can make a difference, in many kinds of communities the work of the British schools suggests working models of individual learning to those who believe, as I do, that what American education needs is definitely not more of the same.

The forces that might help bring about changes in American schools seem few. To some extent the best of the American curriculum projects – such as Educational Services Inc. (now the Educational Development Corporation) – are pushing schools in the right direction. Good, open-ended materials are often in themselves a kind of retraining course for willing teachers, helping them to become more confident of trying informal methods. Curriculum materials are by no means being abandoned in the British schools, but they are making different use of them: it is clear that any curriculum materials must give teachers and students freedom to use them in a variety of ways, and the best materials are often simply handbooks and guides to

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new approaches, rather than set lessons. Curriculum materials become more important in the later years of school. Geoffrey Casten, of the Schools Council, worried that the supremely successful methods of the infant schools, where, of course, the "curriculum" is largely generated by the students' own activities, will prove less successful when widely applied to older children by teachers of varying abilities. This may or may not be true: I saw junior schools where the free methods of the infant schools were being triumphantly vindicated, but I also saw others that were very sleepy and could have used the stimulation of good materials. It is unlikely that curriculum projects can make a difference in this country until they find a way to involve ordinary teachers in creating materials. Americans should profit from the British understanding that the really valuable and enduring part of curriculum reform is the process of creation and thought; unless you let teachers in on that, the stuff is likely to be dead. The American curriculum projects and some school systems might be interested in helping to set up equivalents to the advisory centers in good British authorities, teams of teachers and others whose only role is work in the field with classroom teachers, spreading new ideas. Jerrold Zacharias once proposed display centers that would act as supermarkets for teachers interested in new ideas and techniques. (One role of the advisers in England is to take over classes for teachers so they can attend courses and displays.)

The Prospects for Change

Useful work could be done developing new kinds of tests. The IQ and standard achievement tests are not quite the bogies they are made out to be – I have the feeling that schools use tests as an excuse to keep from having to try out anything new. But the likelihood of change would be increased if their grip on the minds of school administrators and parents could be loosened. Tests that reflect the ability to write, or to reason mathematically would be a great help: the problem is to persuade people to consider the relevance of standards other than the ones now used, and it is clearly a problem that new tests alone would not solve.

Techniques, particularly when devised by outsiders, are never going to be enough. It is in schools that change has to come, and yet the prospects are dim. The private schools that once promoted progressive education are now largely formal in their methods; many are test-ridden, catering to parents who want solid evidence that a second-grade activity will lead to Harvard, and they have invited John Holt's gibe: "a conservative is someone who worships a dead radical." There are communities, where principals and teachers are confident enough of their relationship with parents, that could begin gradually and carefully working along individual lines. Good suburban schools able to face the possibility of slightly lower achievement test scores exist, but they seem to be getting rarer. Some of the good Head Start programs may influence the schools to make the first few years more flexible. And there is a chance that some of the cities where education has reached a crisis point can be prodded into setting up some freer demonstration classes. A new class of schools, likely to be interested in individual learning, will be the community schools now beginning to appear in a few cities. They are interested in change, yet they have the burden of working out another, perhaps more important educational problem: how to get parents to participate in the life of the school; this may be hard enough without also trying to change traditional patterns of classroom teaching. Parents in community schools, like parents everywhere when they face schools, lack convincing models of how things could be different, and they are rightly suspicious of theories and experiments.

This is the point: we lack convincing alternatives, actual classrooms that people could go and see, that teachers could work in, functioning schools that would demonstrate to the public and to educators the kind of learning I've described in this series. They must be institutions that can develop and grow over time, not just demonstration classes. (New York City has tried out every good idea in educational history: once.) To make any impact, these schools will have to be very different from private experiments of the 20's and the 30's, with their ideological confusions and their indifference to public education. The temptation is to say we need many such schools, and we probably do. But a tiny number of infant schools pioneered the changes in the British schools, and it is probable that careful work on a small scale is the way to start a reform worth having, whatever our grandiose educational reformers might say. In the end, you always return to a teacher in a classroom full of children. That is the proper locus of a revolution in the primary schools.

This is the last of three articles.

COMING: *a review by Stanley Kauffmann of Norman Mailer's new novel*

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Israel and Nasser

"What Will Johnson Do?"

by Philip Ben

Greater Jerusalem

Almost all Israelis are busy sightseeing in places they have never been able to visit, like Old Jerusalem, Hebron, the Sinai Desert and the Syrian Mountains. Nevertheless, the prevailing mood is one of deep anxiety about what comes next. People ask one another if the United States will order Israel to get out of the Old City and the West Bank; speculate that there may be an agreement between Russia and America to push the Israelis back from the Suez Canal; are skeptical about ever getting any more arms from the US. In short, almost everyone from cabinet minister to housewife is afraid that, after all, 1967 may turn out to be a repeat of 1956, and that Johnson will follow in the footsteps of Eisenhower and Foster Dulles and pressure Israel into giving up all its military gains from the six-day war. One reason everybody is going sightseeing is the belief that in a few months all these places may once again be out of bounds to Jews. Almost every day they read in the papers that the US and Russia have already agreed on the terms of a resolution calling for Israel's withdrawal in return for some kind of guarantee, perhaps along the lines of the "peace plan" that Tito touted around the Arab capitals. (Such a plan or such guarantee would be considered here as merely a scrap of paper.)

The Arabs now living in Israel share these notions. For instance, there is a Jewish wholesaler in Haifa who is busily welcoming back Arab shopkeepers from Old Jerusalem, Jenin and Nablus whom he hasn't seen for 20 years. They are all old business acquaintances and he is quite ready to extend them credit. But no, they want to pay cash; no bill, please. What they are afraid of is that being in possession of a bill from a Jew will get them in big trouble when Jordanian officials and police return. Similarly, the Israelis have invited many Arab village leaders, teachers and religious leaders and so forth to carry on in their jobs. The usual reply is, "We would like to. But you are not likely to stay here much longer than six months, a year at the most. What would happen to us afterward? When the Egyptians came back to the Gaza Strip in 1957, many Arabs were executed."

Yet, these Jewish fears and Arab beliefs seem to be more or less groundless. In the chancelleries of Paris, London and Washington, and in the lobbies of the United Nations, it is difficult to find much trace of what seems likely when you are near the Nablus Gate of the Jerusalem Wall. There's really no sign at all of an American-Soviet agreement, by which the UN would be called on to recommend an Israeli withdrawal from conquered territories in return for a formal Arab recognition of Israel's existence. Russian Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin did call a few weeks ago on Arthur Goldberg, who was vacationing at Goldberg's farm in Virginia; but there has been no follow-through. The role of Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia is also discounted in all Western capitals. Diplomats in a number of countries do think it possible that at the next regular session of the UN General Assembly a resolution will be adopted, concerning an Israeli withdrawal and an end of Arab belligerency. But they do not think such a formula will be worth anything, because "the Arabs are not going to give up preparing for the next round, and Israel therefore isn't going to give up any territories."

The latter certainly seems true. Most Israelis are prepared, at least, to speculate about what they would be willing to give up. But the reality is that the Arab states, in the aftermath of their unprecedented defeat, continue to refuse to negotiate with Israel on any subject, or even to recognize that a Jewish state exists, though its frontiers are now on the Suez Canal, on the Jordan River and on the slopes of Hermon Mountain, and though Israeli troops could be in Cairo, Damascus and Amman within 24 hours. Faced with this Arab refusal to negotiate about anything, Israel really has no choice but to keep everything it conquered. An Israeli official says, "Were we to decide tomorrow to give up 90 percent of what we conquered, there would still be nobody on the other side to give us a receipt."

There's little evidence in Washington that another 1956 retreat could be staged. American officials do argue that the US can't be friendly only with Israel and refuse to have relations with any Arab countries, especially with the "Arab moderates"; that is why

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America refuses at present to export to Israel anything that could be regarded as war material. Also, there is no doubt that Washington is anxious not to let down King Hussein; in the last 20 years, the United States has made a big investment in the tiny, and until recently strongly anti-Soviet kingdom of Jordan. But few seriously believe that Johnson and Rusk are either willing or able to take the road that Eisenhower and Dulles took 10 years ago. At Glassboro, Johnson is said to have told Kosygin: "Israel is not a satellite of the United States. I have no power to force the Israelis to withdraw. Even if I had, I would never use it. I have seen what the consequences were of the retreat of 1956."

Another factor is the greatly decreased value of two former Arab trump cards: oil and the Suez Canal. In 1956 the closing of the Canal and the withholding of oil put Europe in a serious situation. Now, although Britain and other countries have had losses, the oil tankers are busier than ever. Britain and West Germany continue getting Arab oil through French and Italian channels, and big shipyards that have been lying idle for years have received orders for huge tankers of between 100,000 and 200,000 tons. These monsters will never go through the Suez Canal. So, even if Nasser tries to use the reopening of the Canal as a bargaining lever for pressure by the powers on Israel – and the indications are that sooner or later he will make such a bid – the result may fall far short of his expectations. Nor would Nasser be willing to let Israeli ships pass through the Canal, even if he could get some concessions in exchange.

So what is likely to happen is that the present ceasefire line may become a demarcation line, for years or perhaps for decades. The 1949 armistice lines were expected to last only a few months, but they survived for 18 years, and would still be in force if Nasser had not unexpectedly decided to throw off all restraint toward Israel.

Meanwhile, the Israelis are getting on with construction works. On the 20 miles of highway between Bethlehem and Hebron, thousands of Arabs are cutting stones and carrying gravel which they lay by hand to make the bed for an enlarged highway. It is one way of coping with Arab unemployment. But the wages the workers draw are greatly reduced in value by inflation. I went sightseeing in Hebron with a lecturer at Jerusalem University, who in the war commanded the army unit which conquered the city. We entered a store where only a few weeks ago he bought a pair of moccasins for eight Israel pounds; now the storekeeper was asking 17 pounds. But as much as Jordan's prices have gone up, Israel prices still are higher. Only about an hour's drive from where the Arab workers are building a Bethlehem-Hebron highway, Israeli workers are busy enlarging the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway with the use of very modern road-making equipment. Such an Israeli worker earns four or five times more than an Arab, but for a pair of shoes he pays twice as much as the highly inflated Jordan prices on the West Bank. The question is, can a country of high wages and well-developed technology take into its economic system a large population, which is still living in the Middle Ages and with a correspondingly low wage structure? Israeli economists and politicians debate this endlessly, but nobody has come up with a satisfying answer. Meanwhile, though Arab wages are low the prices they have to pay for necessities have steeply risen.

It is going to cost Israel a great deal to keep all the territories it has conquered, but perhaps it can afford it. At the start of the six-day war, the Israeli government borrowed, from the Bank of Israel, about $330-million. This credit has already been largely repaid out of the Israel Emergency Fund, which along with special sales of Israel bonds brought in almost $500-million in two months. The costs of occupation are relatively modest. The Sinai desert, the West Bank and the Syrian heights are policed with surprisingly light forces. There were 200,000 Israelis mobilized for the war in addition to the standing army of 70,000. Three-fourth of those mobilized are now back in civilian life. The Israeli frontier with Jordan is only half its former length, as is the frontier with Egypt.

This partly explains why the Israelis tend to discount the Arab guerrilla warfare now being advocated by Algerian and Syrian leaders who talk about sending large bands of saboteurs into Israel. A resistance among the Arabs now living under Israeli control is likewise discounted. King Hussein, despite his tiny army and inefficient police, kept Old Jerusalem and the West Bank pretty well under control, although the population was often in almost open revolt against his regime. Why doubt, then, that Israel can do what Hussein did? Of course, there is discontent among the Arab professional classes: doctors, lawyers, teachers. How does an Arab lawyer feel who sees his Arab clients rushing off to Jewish lawyers, in the hope of getting back the property they once owned in the territory which became Israel in 1958? Yet, remarkably few Israelis fear an Arab revolt. Demonstrations like a one-day closing of stores are disregarded: such demonstrations occurred under Hussein at least once in every month.

The Holy Places

It isn't the problem of assimilating 1.5 million Arabs that worries Israelis, it is how to avoid outraging their susceptibilities. What to do with the Moslem holy places? How do you prevent it from being whispered that "the Jews are plotting to take over the Mosque

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on the Rock, and the Patriarchs' Cave in Hebron"? The Cave of the Patriarchs is the legendary burial place of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their wives. A mosque has been built over it. It is equally holy to both Jews and Arabs. At the beginning of the Israeli occupation, the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs took it over, and put in charge of it a rabbi who had more zeal than wisdom. Greater wisdom was shown by the Israeli Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan, who made an arrangement that at certain times the mosque will be open only to Moslems, and at other times for Israeli sightseers who turn up at the rate of 400 packed buses each day.

But this is in Hebron. In Old Jerusalem, the Ministry of Religious Affairs is still in charge, and everything is still a mess. The houses and lanes that surrounded the Wailing Wall have been levelled to leave an open space. The consequence is that the Wall has lost much of its dignity. The open space in front of it is a wilderness of stones, mud and flapping papers. And Moslems are agitated by rumors that the Israelis intend to rebuild Solomon's Temple, which stood where the Mosque on the Rock now is. This is the spot from which Mohammed is said to have ascended to heaven.

Israel is a country now four and a half times bigger than it was only three months ago. But its political structure is outmoded. There are 12 political parties, some inside and some outside the government. Even before June 5, these parties and their leaders were out of tune with the dynamic quality of Israeli life. Now they are completely lost in Israel's new dimensions. The country is still ruled by party caucuses whose members, according to one prominent civil servant, "aren't able to solve problems because they do not even realize that problems exist." That may prove to be more important for Israel's immediate future than anything that is decided at an Arab summit conference.

The Split in Egypt

Whaddya Mean, We Lost?

Cairo

Today Egypt is the land of make-believe. Egyptians believe that the war against Israel has not been lost, that the closing of the Suez Canal is a sign of Egyptian and Arab strength. It is said in the bazaars that the real aim of the US and Israel was to destroy President Nasser's regime and occupy Cairo and Damascus. None of this has happened, therefore Egypt has not lost the war. The authorities have never published an account of the war nor have they given any figures of losses.

Nevertheless, Nasser's regime is in deep trouble. It is a crisis of self-confidence and of confidence in the president. "If we lose Nasser, we have nobody to believe in, and we need somebody," a young Palestinian Arab told me.

Nasser's cabinet is split between "dogmatists" and "realists" who feud with each other. The leader of the dogmatists is Wing-Commander Ali Sabri, who wants the president's political organization, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) to control the state and the economy and push through a primitive program of socialism. He wants emergency laws and complete power for officials of the ASU. Ali Sabri is supported in the cabinet by the minister of war, Huwadi, the minister of interior, Gomaa, and the minister for land reform, Abdel Nur. These men hold the posts of power. They are Pan-Arabists, working for a totalitarian state run by themselves. The parallels with communist regimes are obvious. Lately they have been resentful and worried because less money is available for party and propaganda work, and there are fewer posts for their friends. The spokesman of the "dogmatists" is Professor Anis. In his paper, *Al Goumhouria*, he has repeatedly attacked the "realists" and *their* spokesman, Hassanein Heikal of *Al Ahram*, and has protested violently against any concessions to the West, especially the opening of the Canal.

The "realists" in the cabinet are led by the deputy president, Zakharia Mohieddin, the minister of planning, Kaissouny, the minister of agriculture, Marei, and by Mohammed Fawzi, the career diplomat who heads the foreign ministry. They are struggling to persuade Nasser he must make his peace with Britain and the US if not with Israel

Then, there is what is left of the armed forces. It was after all the army that put the Nasser group of officers into power. Apart from the harassed 30,000 men in Yemen, Egypt's army is now made up of one infantry division, one armored division and a few anti-aircraft batteries. The Israelis hold 5,000 officers and NCOs. The younger Egyptian officers are muttering that Nasser has started and lost two wars, Yemen and Israel, and that it's high time he went. It is, however, uncertain that this feeling is widespread outside the air force and the artillery and signals. It is rumored that 2,400 Soviet military personnel are busy purging the army, and that Nasser has had to agree that they will henceforth supervise training and also tactical and strategic planning.

New taxes to the tune of 132 million Egyptian pounds are to be levied. This means increases in the prices of tea, sugar, cooking oil; cuts in rations; and higher railway fares and telephone charges. Wages and salaries have been cut. And the tug-of-war in the cabinet goes on.

LEO MURAY

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Pop Goes America — II

by Peter Michelson

Last week, I mentioned the cultural sentimentality by which we rhetoricize ideals and thereby obscure our existential relation to them. There is also a sentimental aesthetic tradition. Like the cultural one, this tradition is not in any sense unique to America, but it has found especially fertile conditions in this country. Since the Second World War, however, the poetics of sentiment have been eclipsed – or at least rivaled – by a poetics of the absurd. The distinction can be illustrated by two modern novels. The difference between Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* (1948) argues more than the idiosyncratic differences between two distinctive novelists. It argues artistic evolution from the sentimental to the absurd imagination. Hemingway's concluding sentence is, "After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain." Mailer's is "Hot dog." For Hemingway nature is so sympathetic it weeps for man's fate. Or at least complements it. When Henry, the hero, escapes the lunatic Italian army, returns to love Catharine, put a baby in her belly, and watch her die in childbirth, Hemingway is reworking an old formula of the sentimental novel. And in fact the emotional effect of the novel derives from its appeal to sentiment – the theme of star-crossed lovers. The whole novel has been a preparation for that poignant, desolate walk through the rain. Twenty years later Mailer did not have the sentimental option in imaging his war. Nor could he afford the luxury of being half in love with easeful death. "Hot dog" is Major Dalleson's affirmation of the absurd bureaucratic insanity that runs not only the war but the universe, the absurdity of moral displacement. Here, somewhat abridged, is the image for which "Hot dog" is the punctuation:

> "It was simple, a lark. . . . The Japanese had set up many small hospitals. . . . The Americans who came in would finish off whatever wounded men were left, smashing their heads with rifle butts or shooting them point blank. One patrol . . . discovered four Japanese soldiers lying in a stupor across a trail, their ponchos covering them. The lead man halted, picked up some pebbles and flipped them into the air. The pebbles landed on the first sleeping soldier with a light pattering sound like hail. He awakened slowly, stretched . . . yawned, groaned a little, cleared his throat. . . . Then he poked his head out. . . . The lead man waited until the Jap saw him and then, as he was about to scream, . . . sent a burst of tommy gun slugs through him. He followed this by ripping his gun down the middle of the trail, stitching holes neatly through the ponchos. . . . Occasionally they would take prisoners, but if this was late in the day . . . it was better if the prisoners did not slow them. One squad . . . was delayed grievously. . . . The platoon leader looked at his watch at last and sighed, 'We're going to have to dump them.' . . . The sullen Jap seemed to know what he meant, for he stepped off the trail and waited with his back turned. The shot caught him behind the ear. Another soldier came up behind the prisoner with the swollen genitals and gave him a shove which sprawled him on the ground. He gave a single scream of pain before he was killed. The third one was half in a coma and had no idea of what happened. . . .
>
> "Two weeks later Major Dalleson sat in the newly finished operations and training shack and ruminated pleasurably about the past, present, and future. . . . The training program was going to begin the next day, and this was the part of military life that the Major found most congenial. . . . Tomorrow there would be the first parade and inspection and the Major anticipated it eagerly. . . . His days were quite busy. . . . This training was what he liked; there was no getting away from it. . . . He breathed deeply, savoring the pungent fish smell of the water. He always did his best, no one could deny that. A rosy satisfaction eddied through him. At this moment he got his idea. He could jazz up the map-reading class by having a full-size color photograph of Betty Grable in a bathing suit, with a coordinate grid system laid over it. The instructor could point to different parts of her and say, 'Give me the coordinates'. That was it. He'd write Army. . . . The Major could see every unit in the Army using his idea at last. He clenched his fists with excitement. *Hot Dog!*"

The difference between Hemingway's pathetic hero and Mailer's absurd hero (Dalleson, remember, stumbles into the final victory on Anopopei) signifies a transition from a poetics based upon images of poignant moments to one based on analysis of conditions, a shift from indirection to assault as artistic strategy. Behind Hemingway's irony and his celebrated *nadir* there is the energy born of anger. A sentimental anger at being cosmically cheated of his beautiful image of love. Not so with Mailer. There is no indignation because there was no expectation. And Mailer's vision is too exhausted to be angry at what had become commonplace – cosmic fraud. Absurdity has supplanted idealism. Mailer's *Hot Dog!* signifies a revolutionary artistic orientation.

It is not really much of a step from that hot dog to hamburgers, baked potatoes, soup cans, and the aesthetic of pop art. It is not much of a step because the same ironic metaphysics is behind both images. It is a metaphysics

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that affirms no reality, has faith in no abiding truth. Not even the beautiful image. Everything, thus, has the same meaning or non-meaning. And one might just as well do a portrait of a soup can as do one of a mother and child. The difference is simply in the spectacle of prettiness or poignance, and they of course are chimerical values. The contemporary aesthetic for which pop art is the radical center has substituted reality for beauty. Its sense of reality excludes beauty as a premise, and quite naturally finds the absurd in everything. What could articulate the moral absurdity of our culture more directly than the portrait of a hamburger, framed and hung in state on a gallery wall? Or the replica of a baked potato sculpted and pedestaled? Or a Brillo box on exhibit? And what could say it less sentimentally? Such works are formless in the sense that they do not focus on themselves (and don't therefore stand up to traditional analysis) but rather allude to their origins in our lives and the ironic meaninglessness that their universal recognition proclaims. And in refusing to deal in beauty, such art refutes the sentimental artistic tradition. In one stroke, then, it has dispatched the traditional categories of form and feeling.

When Dalleson, in sublime ignorance of the moral horror of the war on Anopopei, turns that war into a bureaucratic boy scout camping trip, and describes his Junior Chamber of Commerce ethics ("They were out for improvements like that."), and concludes the novel with his celebration of a world so conceived and operated, then Mailer's hot dog has given us the absurd image that finds its most recent statement in pop art. It is that absurd image with which contemporary art denies the viability of sentiment both as an aesthetic force and a cultural value.

Mailer of course is by no means the first writer to use absurd imagery. The point is that somehow after World War II – it may after all have been World War II that made existentialism intelligible to America – the anti-sentimental aspects of the absurd began to take hold here. Immediately after the war, writers like Mailer and Ralph Ellison represented the moral dislocation of not only our world but also of our sense of order, destiny, and good as well. And in hitting the military at such a time, and in hitting race, they got at our fundamental sentimentalities. Having gone through the military and racial wars, they had a moral dimension that had not been accessible to such writers as Nathanael West in the thirties. They had also a metaphysical sense that he lacked. Then in the early fifties the Beats countered American sentimentalities with oriental ones. But it was resistance nevertheless. And in the middle fifties the Beat resistance was fortified with the arrival in America of the French "existentialists," the absurd became part of our vocabulary, and from then on it was open season: *Augie March, Howl, Lolita, The Happy Birthday of Death, Malcolm, Rabbit Run, Ginger Man, The American Dream, Catch 22.* But it has been the context of pop art and psychedelic bohemia that has given the really contemporaneous stamp to the new absurdity, called sometimes the ridiculous.

The ridiculous goes beyond the absurd by abandoning dialectic altogether as a mode of understanding. Serious form, in the ridiculous, happens only at those epiphanal moments when the images explode their shot. Between times what you get is patter and amusement. Ronald Tavel's *Gorilla Queen,* currently off-off Broadway, is an excellent example of this technique. The central image of the play – that of a blonde Claudette Colbert, about to be sacrificed to a great ape, Queen Kong, but rescued by the White Hunter, Clyde Batty – is a parody of Grade B exotica films. But in the extravagant development of that image the play articulates in parody the religious, racial, moral, and power sentimentalities that make up much of the American mythology.

Inversion, as Robert Brustein observed, is at the center of Tavel's play, just as it is at the center of the whole pop genre. Queen Kong is a queer, demiurge analogue for God. God as an ape in drag? Not altogether; when Clyde Batty – great white hunter and hefter of the white man's burden – shoots Queen Kong, Taharahnugi White Woman emerges from his body. By the end of the play Clyde is sodomized by the corpse of Kong; from that union he emerges, in ape-god body, as Clyde-as-Kong, and is then mated with Taharahnugi White Woman. Taharahnugi turns out to be a transvestite, and Clyde himself, before his transsubstantiation, is discovered to have webbed toes. Remember "Be kind to your webfooted friends, for a duck may be somebody's mother"? That parodic image is made into a comic metaphysics ridiculing our racial and religious sentiment.

What marks this as contemporaneous is its absence of moral judgment. The absurd has strong moral implications – *e.g.* Dalleson's obtuseness defines his immorality – but the ridiculous has

Viet Napalm

(A Rondel)

To save face –
We bomb to obliterate faces
Of thousands, ravage places
Whose folk had always a sense of place,

Of the wheeling day, its spoked hours, peace
Under the tent of night; slicing to pieces
To save face –
We bomb to obliterate faces.

This clamshell in my hand shows space
Tenderly palmed between dark-rimmed, chalk eyelids, spaces
For every mollusc part, wing-cases
Of a butterfly inside-out – stiffened, in case;
To save face
We bomb to obliterate faces.

BARBARA HOWES

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only ludicrous implications. The universe, especially as we formulate it according to our psychic needs, is a joke. We are ridiculed, then, for taking seriously what is chimerical – our sentimentalities about racial superiority, sexual normality, and religious revelation. As Claudette is about to be sacrificed she says, "Gee, it's all kinda exciting. What a situation comedy." The response, "Ain't excitin' for me: I seen this play before. . . . She dies in the end." We've all seen this play before, and Claudette never dies in the end: the blonde heroine holds hands and sings a duet with the great White Hunter. Not this time. The White Hunter has become a faggot ape-god, and when he proposes (". . . queen of Our heart, can you picture us both on a bicycle built for two?") Claudette replies, "Sorry, Queen, I ain't a queen: I can't marry you: I'm a lezzy: wanna marry a lezzy?" And when Clyde-as-Kong responds, "A Man had as well marry a celibate and beget imaginings," the play's central metaphor clicks into focus. The Grade B film world has become our image of ourselves, and culturally, we have in fact played God in joining together false, perverse ideals to beget false, perverse imaginings.

Thus the play constructs a metaphor which reverses our normal values, and in the reversal we get flashes of the ridiculous dissociation between our ideals and the institutions we construct to realize them. Unlike the absurd, it does not offer a behavioral way out of the cosmic joke. It focuses its Dionysian energy on imaging the joke itself. And it is in this sense a classical kind of comedy about men mistaking their ignorance for knowledge and their pointlessness for power. The pop or camp sense of art and the theatre is that it is *play*. And Shakespeare long ago convinced us that the world is a stage. So life is play, too. When one of Tavel's characters puns of the theatre that it is a "drag," it means only that art, like life, is simply a toy in disguise. But then we can, and do, make nearly anything into a toy or game. We play war games. We make puppets of other countries, we play with rocket ships, with poverty, civil rights, and justice. Why not play with art and life?

However nervous it may make us, such an art refutes the last liberal sentimentality – that art is god, or even good. Art, like everything else, simply *is*. The critics made most nervous by this idea are those who want to preserve formal or professional or emotional "standards" in art. As if such standards themselves were not a game. When one cannot tell whether he's tuned into Huntlybrinkly or "Combat," when the news and entertainment media are a continuous series of death and destruction analogues, when loyalty, morality, and religion are measured in terms of one's willingness to die, when the one consistent fact of life is violent death, then one cannot afford to take either art or life very seriously. To take art seriously is frivolous, and to take life seriously will make one paranoid. Under such circumstances what makes art meaningful at all is that it documents a vital moment for the artist and his audience. Art tells one that he *is* alive: not that he will be alive, nor that he will be happy, nor

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(Director: Dr. W. A. Shurcliff, physicist)

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that he will go to heaven, or hell, just that he *is* alive. So its vitality is infinitely more important than form or precision or emotional prescription. This is why the pop aesthetic is almost exclusively comic. Tragedy requires a cosmic sense of man's sympathetic involvement that is uncongenial to the ridiculous sensibility. Comedy permits a flat contemporaneous engagement of experience.

We have become so accustomed, since romanticism, to thinking of art as idealistic – either imaging ideals, as in Wordsworth or the popular Frost, or satirizing their failure, as in Byron or Auden, that we are critically ill-equipped to deal with an art that does not acknowledge ideal sentiments as a viable starting point. But that is where we are now. This generation of artists has been bred without faith in either beauty or truth, without faith in any programmatic generalities.

The sense of absurdity has become a part of our cultural fiber. The Beats, the Hippies, the Psychedelics testify to that. Their philosophy is based on suspicion of everything but the moment. Such a metaphysic makes pleasure a good, and we can only admit to that when we recognize that our cultural and religious sentimentalities are constructed to suppress and castrate pleasure. Tavel's primate-hero, Clyde, denounces religion thus: ". . . I disapprove of your religion in the altogether. . . . Cause it's a cult grounded on pain, on banal anal mass masochism and shady sadyism. Isn't it funny, honey, that in two thousand years of worship it shouldn't have occurred to you that pleasure can also be fun?" Another pop image jumps into a religious metaphor: The naked truth is that man likes to please himself, and simply constructs religious authority for what he already finds naturally attractive. In so doing he submerges the pleasure principle, hence, shady sadyism. Our problem critically is to find the terms to deal with an imagination that finds things so universally absurd as to have only to call out the number of the joke to get a laugh. We can deal easily enough with the traditional absurd like Pinter's *Homecoming*, where we are given essentially one image and then taken around, over, under, through, and behind it. Such care argues the playwright's concern for his themes. But the ridiculous extreme of the absurd does not *care*. It throws out an image, plays with it a moment, and then goes on to a new one. There is a sense of coherence (unity?) only when we add up the absurdities to their total Ridiculousness. It is an art, then, that sacrifices everything – logic, order, form, beauty, sympathy, and sentiment – to present the truth of its vision. And it is a vision much less esoteric than we like to think.

The American literature of protest – from Thoreau through Masters, Mencken, and Dreiser to the present – has always struck at what America most wanted to be, comfortably middle class. It is not so easy to be comfortable and middle class as the radical in us would like to think. If you're rich you have to give up a lot; if you're poor you have to get a lot. And in any case, you've got to have a cosmology – really believe in it – that will let you be comfortable. Presbyterians, for example, can't do that until they have sentimentalized Calvin, which has taken 400 years. It took America, where the living is easy and Walt Disney defines the cosmos, to bring aristocratic predestination and doctrinal depravity to its knees. Here is Tavel's ridiculous image of cosmic coherence and the science thereof: to keep the smut level down, the chimney must be cleaned before Claudette Colbert can be sacrificed to Queen Kong. But no one knows where the chimney sweep is, and the priest insists that, "Someone *must* tell! The someone who knows where he is." Question: "How do you know someone knows where he is? How do you know anyone knows where he is"? Queen Kong settles the matter – and all such matters – thus:

> "Because someone always knows where someone else is, such is pure Cartesian logic; because any one always knows where everyone is, as follows in undiluted Carthusian logic based on the well-known specimen theory of the sample that's amply the whole; and because we are all really one and, being one, are some and, being some, are none and so actually one and since one knows none of two, therefore one specimen knows one of one and therefore one of you knows where one another of you is right now, which is authentic cartographic logic so whoever it is had better tell Sister Carries right away and suffer no further delay. I haf spoken: let it be written, let it be done!"

The ridiculous sensibility, then, not only images an outrageous morality, but it also avails us of a decadent metaphysics. *Gorilla Queen* closes with a speech by Brute to the audience. He takes a paper rose from a cuspidor and says to the audience:

> "Ladies and Gentlemen of every genus: Forget dem dirty minded fakes: Art ain't never 'bout life, but life *is* only 'bout art. Dis rose? Oh, it ain't no symbol . . . and dat's cause it ain't got nothin' to do wit life either. Dis here rose is all 'bout art. Here, take it" – (he throws the rose into the audience).

The extravagant flower was an Oscar Wilde trademark, and the idea that nature is understood by the images of it that we construct is Wilde's own critical thesis. It is decadent in that it

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CRISIS IN OUR CITIES:

What Rural America Can Do About It

Since its early days, our nation has periodically faced a crisis in its cities.

And, since the early days, the root cause has been the same . . . people flocking to the cities in search of something better . . . people leaving areas of little opportunity in search of fulfillment for themselves and their children.

In earlier times, the people came from overseas. Nearly all of them came from the land which no longer provided them with a living.

Today the people who fill our cities in search of a better life . . . nearly 600,000 of them a year . . . come from our own countryside, nearly all of them from the land which no longer offers them a living.

The fact is, as Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman and other informed government officials have noted, that 70% of our nation's population is crowded into one percent of our land . . . many of them crowded into space covered by brick and mortar and macadam, over-laden with smog-filled air . . . treeless, flowerless, hopeless.

They are the victims of a quiet revolution in agriculture which no longer needs the labor of large numbers of human beings to produce the vast quantities of food and fiber we provide for the world. They are today's landless immigrants who formed our city ghettoes and slums of generations past.

The people of rural America, and America's rural electrics, believe this view of the past and of the present contains the seeds of our future . . . a brighter, more productive future for the people of the cities and the people in the rural areas.

We believe it is time we use one of our nation's greatest assets . . . our uncrowded countryside . . . to help solve the problem which concerns us all.

Rural America boasts more than space. It has fresh air and sun and sky and water. It has room for kids to run barefoot through grass covered with early morning dew, hills covered with clean snow for sleds and skis, fields for people and dogs to romp in.

And it has more.

In the towns and villages of rural America there are uncrowded streets and sidewalks. There is electric power and transportation. There are good roads to bring the products of hard-working people to the great market places.

What rural America lacks are job opportunities. Of the nearly 14 million new jobs created in our country in the past 15 years, few were created in rural areas. Yet polls say half our population would like to live and work in rural areas.

We believe that unless we bend our efforts to the development of rural America, we will fail to solve the problems of our cities. Unless we stem the tide of migration from the country to the city that puts more and more people into less and less space, we will have ignored our greatest asset in meeting one of our gravest problems.

We must start now to develop job opportunities, adequate hospitals and medical facilities, better schools and theaters and libraries, better water and sewer systems, and improved public services and facilities for industry in our rural areas. With them, rural America *can* meet the job hunger of its own people. It *can* provide the space and living room city people so desperately seek.

The nation's rural electrics view with optimism the efforts of our nation's leaders to restore the balance between rural and urban America. We pledge our support and the continuation of our unstinting effort. We invite the participation and cooperation of all people concerned about the future of our country, regardless of where they live.

There is, after all, only one nation, and we are all part of it.

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eschews the reality of dialectical morality and substitutes a reality determined by artistic imagination. The thesis of *Gorilla Queen,* and that of much pop art, is that our "heroic" ideals are the Grade B products of Grade B films. Tavel has turned these heroes, heroines, and heroics into moral ironies by reflecting them in the light of their own moral vacuity, *i.e.* their absurdity. Thus decadence becomes a figural representation of the ridiculousness of, for example, sentimentalized virility. D. H. Lawrence sentimentalized this decadence in his Prussian officer story by making it tragic and fatal. But we know, as Gunter Grass has recently pointed out, that Nazis and Jews, villains and victims, have lain together like lion and lamb. In life we don't die for our atrocities, we translate them into regrettable historical epochs, and we live more or less comfortably until we die. Somewhere there's a joke in all this, a joke on our sentimental equation of death and expiation. Sometimes we die for our sentimentalities, as Americans do in Vietnam or the Germans and Japanese kamikazes did in World War II. And sometimes we die for somebody else's sentimentalities, as the Jews did in Germany. But mostly we live with them. The artistic vision of the ridiculous is a way of letting us see our rhetoric in its full decadence, so that we may know just how preposterous it is to have to die for it.

Pilot into Poet

by Richard Tillinghast

James Dickey's new book of poems offers one more indication that American poetry is moving away from the tradition of Eliot and Auden. Gone are the days of the dry, ironic scholar-poets. Dickey is non-academic, non-urban. Who would have expected a poet to come out of the New South – Atlanta – where Dickey was for years a successful advertising man? Not only an advertising man, but a resident of suburbia, and an ace pilot in World War II and Korea?

Poems 1957-67
by James Dickey
(Wesleyan; $6.95)

Although he shows little interest in defining "Southern Culture" in the manner of Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom, Dickey is typically Southern in his concerns. Nowhere else does one find so many poems about animals, hunting, fishing, fighting, the natural world. He makes it harder for us to feel comfortable in the city, riding the subway, breathing exhaust fumes, walking always on paved surfaces. Yet his poems could hardly be called pastoral, implying a turning-away from city life to an ideally imagined country life. Whereas pastoral literature is usually interested in the natural world only as a foil for the artificial or civilized world, Dickey almost never takes advantage of this ready-made, ironic contrast. He makes radically original poetry out of things that would hardly occur to anyone else as possible subjects for poems. And I don't mean that he is adding to that dismal store of poems written to convince us that our drab, "unpoetic" lives are actually quite the thing.

Reading a Dickey poem often means being manipulated into an emotional experience. This is more or less true of all poetry, but since the state of mind Dickey generally wants to produce in the reader involves heightened consciousness or even a mystical attitude, the language sometimes works only if you are reacting correctly, *i.e.*, as the poet intends. Dickey's main fault, particularly in his early poems, is his use of language which seems forced and artificially heightened. Many verbal effects in poetry depend upon their context, of course, and it is probably unfair to abstract something in this way, but here is the closing stanza of "The Salt Marsh." He is talking about walking through marsh grasses:

> And nothing prevents your bending
> With them, helping their wave
> Upon wave upon wave upon wave
> By not opposing,
> By willing your supple inclusion
> Among fields without promise of harvest,
> In their marvelous, spiritual walking
> Everywhere, anywhere.

This is about the worst example I could find. It will be seen, however, that such an ending could work only if the reader were so moved that he would respond emotionally to anything the poet suggested.

Dickey's standard line has tended to be a variable, three-beat line in which the unstressed syllables are not reckoned, as in "The Poisoned Man," from *Helmets* (1964):

> When the rattlesnake bit, I lay
> In a dream of the country, and dreamed
> Day after day of the river,
> Where I sat with a jacknife and quickly
> Opened my sole to the water.

In his newer work, Dickey gives us a wider variety of subject-matter and poetic forms. "Reincarnation," for example, about a country judge who is reincarnated as a rattlesnake, uses a very long and roughly anapestic line:

> Everything follows that as naturally as the creation
> Of the world, leaving behind arms and legs, leaving behind
> The intervals between tracks, leaving one long wavering step
> In sand and none in grass: he moves through, moving nothing,
> And the grass stands as never entered.

Critics are fond of asking why no one ever writes long poems these days, although in recent years several excellent long poems have appeared, most notably John Berryman's *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet,* and his work in progress, the *Dream Songs.* Dickey has included a number of poems in this book which run from four to ten pages, all of them about difficult and unusual subjects. The longest and best of these, "The Firebombing," is spoken by a middle-class American suburbanite who remembers his part in the firebombing raids on Japan. Images of

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the war alternate in his mind with images of his present life as home-owner, husband, and *pater familias:*

I did not think of my house
But think of my house now
Where the lawn mower rests on its laurels
Where the diet exists
For my own good where I try to drop
Twenty years, eating figs in the pantry
Blinded by each and all
Of the eye-catching cans that gladly have caught my wife's eye
Until I cannot say
Where the screwdriver is where the children
Get off the bus where the new
Scoutmaster lives . . .

Reading the description of a bombing mission, one begins to sense something of how it must feel to be a bomber pilot dealing in mass destruction. This is the genuine article, and as usual, one's previous expectations turn out to be inadequate:

All leashes of dogs
Break under the first bomb, around those
In bed, or late in the public baths: around those
Who inch forward on their hands
Into medicinal waters.
Their heads come up with a roar
Of Chicago fire:
Come up with the carp pond showing
The bath house upside down
Standing stiller to show it more
As I sail artistically over
The resort town followed by farms,
Singing and twisting
All the handles in heaven . . .

What one is not prepared for are the thrill and sense of power that the pilot gets out of bombing. And those who survive wars, those who win them, are damaged and corrupted by

The honored aesthetic evil,
The greatest sense of power in one's life,
That must be shed in bars, or by whatever Means.

After all the vague talk of war-guilt, how exhilarating to see it identified as something specific in one man's mind! Near the end of the poem the speaker describes his failure to identify with the people he bombed. If, the poem ends by saying, such identification is not possible for him,

. . . it is that I can imagine
At the threshold nothing
With its ears crackling off
Like powdery leaves,
Nothing with children of ashes, nothing not
Amiable, gentle, well-meaning,
A little nervous for no
Reason a little worried a little too loud
Or too easygoing nothing I haven't lived with
For twenty years, still nothing not as
American as I am, and proud of it.
Absolution? Sentence? No matter;
The thing itself is in that.

In "Slave Quarters," another of the long poems, a man visiting the ruins of an old Southern plantation is trying to imagine himself first as the plantation owner and then as one of the slaves. This act of the imagination is typical of Dickey's poems: more than an attempt to "identity," it involves an effort to *become* another person, or even in some cases an animal. Here he recreates the plantation itself, "In the great place the great house is gone from in the sun/Room, near the kitchen of air." The broken line he uses occasionally here and in "The Firebombing" is reminiscent of Anglo-Saxon poetry, the words separated by spaces which represent pauses and assist the movement of thought more accurately than punctuation does. He is metamorphosed into "A Coastal islander, proud of his grounds,/His dogs, his spinet/From Savannah, his pale daughters," tomcatting by night in the slave quarters. Then he imagines himself as a slave, working in the fields,

. . . . some other
Man moving near me on horseback whom
I look in the eyes
Once a day.

A fusion of white and black occurs in the owner's son by a slave. The poem ends on a realization of the slave owner's moral burden. The poet asks what happens

When you learn that there is no hatred
Like love in the eyes
Of a wholly owned face? When you think of what
It would be like what it has been
What it is to look once a day
Into an only
Son's brown, waiting, wholly possessed
Amazing eyes, and not
Acknowledge, but own?

Dickey has moved from a fascination with pure consciousness to poems of social and moral concern. Yet there is none of the boring preaching that one associates with moral and social issues. One is forced to see the larger issues of morality as they affect the lives of sharply drawn, individual men and women. The unusual thing about the people who live in these poems is that on the whole they are not the passive failures who have inhabited our poetry since J. Alfred Prufrock. James Dickey's personae are active and strong. It seems to me that this makes his poetry all the more relevant to life in America, where our problems are not limited by failure. We must ask what morality is suitable to power, and what conscience means for those who always win.

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The Puzzling Miss Stead

by Charles Thomas Samuels

Christina Stead's *The Salzburg Tales* (1934) was considered a promising debut; but by 1952, Miss Stead had fallen from favor with readers and critics, and she published nothing for 14 years. Now embarked on a second career, she is being recommended through a falsification of her first. When she recently appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, the editors asserted, "she has had an ardent following among critics . . . although her works have never met with popular success." In the 30's and early 40's, snob appeal aside, Christina Stead sold respectably; whereas her ardent admirers were Clifton Fadiman and *Time* magazine. More serious critics found her prolix, aimless, and showy.

The Puzzleheaded Girl
by Christina Stead
(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $6.95)

Writing in *The New Republic* in 1941, Mary McCarthy judged *The Man Who Loved Children* "an hysterical tirade," but two years ago, when at a single whistle from Randall Jarrell, the critical community launched a bandwagon to herald the book's reappearance, Miss McCarthy's important criticisms were simply ignored. Thus the *Post* could maintain, "belated recognition" makes it certain that Christina Stead will be acknowledged "one of the best novelists of the century." Well, it won't because she isn't; though she does possess an authentic talent that can't be described through hyperbole or legends.

Stead appeals through the oddness of her characters and the relentless, uniquely resourceful dialogue through which she creates them. But the very amplitude of her portraits demands a significance she finds difficult to establish. The baby-talking egoist Sam Pollit (in *Children*) never comes to represent colonial condescension, though Stead hints at the connection, just as Nellie Cotter, in last year's *Dark Places of the Heart*, never quite distills the cant of England's welfare state. Since the novellas which make up Stead's new book are both short and witty, they don't seem aimless; but, for the most part, they are scarcely more edifying than her novels.

"The Dianas," for example, portrays a nervous, virgin tease, who is apparently an object of satire. Juggling dates like a busy executive, Lydia satisfies none of her admirers, preferring to give her attention to the love-crossed girlfriend she torments with unwanted solicitude. Sick with waiting for her married lover's divorce, Tamara criticizes Lydia's romanticism:

> ". . . Marriage is give and take."
> "Oh, no, no," cried Lydia. "It must be all give, he must give. I won't give. A man must be a light to a woman and guide her whole life and she must lean on him and have nothing more to think of. . . ."
> ". . . You must bring something to marriage."
> "I bring twenty thousand dollars and a grand piano."

With such wacky confidence, Lydia decides to tackle the middle-aged professor whom her mother, another "Diana," has held dangling. Citing her admirers, Lydia begs his protection on a continental holiday – at her expense. But the poor man learns the price when Lydia insists on sleeping in a double bed, denies his advances, and advertises his alleged impotence to the hotel staff. Though Tamara ends a suicide, Lydia, who has littered Europe with wounded males, is back in America at the story's end, the bride of some special Acteon.

Lydia's machinations are amusing and her ultimate success through surrender is both ironic in itself and in contrast with Tamara's failure. But the implication that love conquers even so devious a maiden seems banal for such vivid eccentricity, while the hint that nice girls finish last is merely sarcastic. In its original magazine appearance, the story was called "The Huntress"; significant universality can't be achieved through a change in title.

In "The Puzzleheaded Girl," universality is the obvious goal, but this story only indicates how Stead's characters resist definition. Honor Lawrence, who materializes one day at the Farmer's Utilities Corporation, is a mystery crying out to be interpreted. One of the firm's partners, Gus Debrett, thinks her innocent but tantalizing; as the story progresses, she feeds the latter impression by qualifying the former. Is her avowed superiority to trade an indictment of the firm's shady business practices or an affectation? Does she hold men off in the manner of a silly virgin, or, since she expertly obtains handouts, is she a cynical tease? Throwing herself, in turn, on the wives of two partners, Honor succeeds in stirring their marital resentments. Though she also insults clients and shirks her duties, Debrett clings to his belief that she is a holy fool.

Years later, after Debrett's marriage has collapsed and Honor has evidently disappeared, she turns up looking like a prostitute. But to Debrett's second wife, Honor, now a bigamous syphilitic hurling curses at love, represents "the ragged wayward heart of woman that doesn't want to be caught and hasn't been caught."

Unfortunately, Mrs. Debrett's exegesis evades some facts. Left out of account are Honor's social conceptions and suggestive past (despite New England manners, she is an Italian immigrant's child). Also ignored is her identification with life's general uncertainty, the "gadfly of fate." We are told that, like "the ghouls of Prague," Honor enters the forms of many women, yet Stead also insists that the girl is no fantasy figure; and, in any case, obscure realism can't be solved through intermittent allegory. Though some of the characters sport names like Honor's – Good, Zero, Magna – at least two – Debrett and Scott – resist hermeneutics. Finally, the puzzleheaded girl is too various for Stead's summation. She is also too fey; what begins by resembling "Bartleby, the

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Scrivener" veers fatally in the direction of "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

A third novella, "The Rightangled Creek," is even more baffling. This story begins with a self-styled socialist, potboiling his way to literary prominence, who resembles both Nellie Cotter and Sam Pollit. Suddenly, however, Davies and his family pass out of the tale, leaving their rented farm to some friends. Then a neighbor tells the Parsons of a murder committed in their farmhouse by the original owner's daughter, while Stead's "sort of ghost story" begins to concentrate on mice in the wainscoting and a particularly benign presence which never becomes visible. Flirting with the notion of making the property into an artist's retreat, the Parsons hire an architect who believes that poison ivy is harmless and rolls in a patch of it to prove his point. Effrontery kills him, the Parsons move away, and that, despite some tart jokes and a vivid depiction of nature's appeal, is that.

Though energetic and witty, all three stories have similar flaws. Dotty characters parade in such profusion that we sometimes see only a vaudeville lacking principles of inclusion more expressive than the impresario's taste and the curtain's fall. Aphorisms, excellent in themselves, becloud the plots which transpire in an atmosphere of demi-realism that is frequently disorienting and sometimes incredible. Typical obsessions – with sexual warfare and bogus ideology – are evident, but they never quite achieve the status of themes. Just as we are ready to write Stead off, however, she comes along with a novella, richly ironic and admirably developed, but similar in technique to her comparative failures.

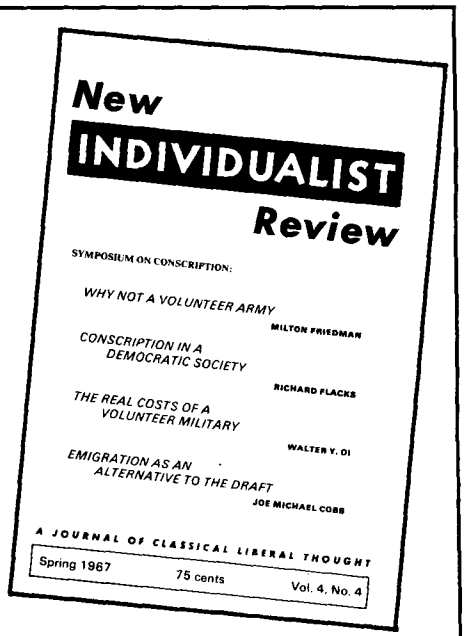
"The Girl from the Beach" convincingly realizes that comedy of senescent lust versus lethal girlishness which unites the three best tales. Half of the story, originally published in *The Paris Review* as "George," depicts a Bulgarian crime-reporter, sentimental in his womanizing, theatrical in his nationalism, and ludicrous in the care of his fifty-year-old body that retains the muscle tone of a young man's. Stead has often done such charming phonies, but never with such *brio;* "George" deserves the Aga Khan Prize that it was awarded earlier this year.

The second half introduces a young tease like Lydia and Honor Lawrence, but it makes of her a more representative, believable figure. Living on the parental dole in Paris, Linda Hill rooms with homosexuals to save rent, fills a deep-pocketed skirt with stolen silverware to occupy her time, and passes with studied insouciance through her identity crisis. Crossing her path, George immediately succumbs. For him, mature women are "an army of aunts and mothers, midwives and charwomen"; Linda must become the fourth of his girl-wives.

In his sentimental adoration of youth, however, George ignores the wisdom of Eve. Bilking him of his possessions and money, Linda also strips away his pretensions. "I don't think he cared for me. He was always doing what he wanted to," she tosses off while preparing for the safe American marriage that Daddy has insured by taking the young man into his business. She craftily goes "in the folkways," while the flamboyant European decides to marry yet another girl from the beach. Though gayer and less adorned, Stead's story is an unsentimental, small-scaled *Lolita.*

Finally, Stead seems to exist between the extremes set by her critics. In an age when most novelists are shooting the form through a cannon, making up in technical display for loss of purpose and confidence, her mimetic zeal is invigorating despite its frequent pointlessness. Moreover, her attempts at articulating a theme are so lively and musical in themselves that one wants to test the possibility of a leitmotif throughout her work. If her new publisher can be persuaded to reissue her books in reasonably priced editions new readers may just solve the puzzle of a 65-year-old writer vigorous enough to start a second career, yet heedless enough to leave her wrinkles as visible as her wise old eyes.

DOES A MAN OWE MILITARY DUTY TO HIS COUNTRY?



Or has service obligation become an excuse for totalitarian inroads against individual freedom? Could the United States rely upon a volunteer army? Has the Government needlessly enslaved millions of young men for twenty years?

These and other challenging questions are examined in the Spring 1967 issue of NEW INDIVIDUALIST REVIEW, *A Journal of Classical Liberal Thought.* Send for a copy of this special issue today — only 75c (two for $1.30), or begin a subscription with this issue (one year, $3.00).

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A Tragedy of Errors

by Alex Campbell

Louis J. Halle, a distinguished contributor to this journal and formerly a member of the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State, never raises his voice:

> "For half a century the United States had nourished a sentimental attachment to the Chinese nation, an attachment that reflected a pure idealism accompanied by a degree of simplicity. One hesitates to enter into the psychological elements of this attachment, as one must always hesitate to enter into the psychological elements of any self-conscious virtue. At least part of the reason why we Americans loved the Chinese people was that we were allowed to patronize them."

Pure Gibbon.

The Cold War has other historians, and Mr. Halle does not break their consensus that it has been mostly a tragi-comedy of errors. He remarks that Soviet expansion – in any case unpremeditated – in fact ended in 1948, and by early 1951 "the objective of containment had . . . been achieved." The Cold War nevertheless continued, apparently for two main reasons. After Stalin's death the Russians offered concessions in Europe, but the United States stiffened its attitude, insisting on Germany being reunified and an American ally; this was "clearly unacceptable to Moscow." Second, when Mao Tse-tung won the Chinese civil war, the United States interpreted this to mean that Moscow had just added 600-million people to its Soviet empire.

The Cold War As History
by Louis J. Halle
(Harper & Row; $6.95)

Since Halle completed his book, the late Dr. Hans Kroll, a West German ambassador to Moscow, has revealed how in 1958 Khrushchev told him if the East Germans held elections resulting in a non-communist government, "the Soviet government would not exactly be happy about this but it would come to terms with the results." Others have pointed out that Khrushchev wanted the kind of Germany that would serve as a "weak buffer" between Western Europe and an Eastern Europe dominated by Russia – which was more or less what Sazonov, the Tsar's foreign minister in the First World War, had wanted. The statesmen who assembled for the Congress of Vienna over a century ago would easily have got the point, but there is little evidence that John Foster Dulles (or Dean Acheson, or Dean Rusk?) understood it.

Mr. Halle is, on the whole, too generous to the Department of State he once adorned. He says for instance that the United States in 1955 hardened its attitude in Europe "for what may well be considered sound reasons"; what were they? He likewise excuses the gigantic American blunder over China, calling it a "foregone conclusion" that American citizens and politicians "remote from the scene" would view the triumph of the Chinese communists as the capture of China by Russia. Does this excuse Secretaries of State? Acheson as well as Dulles and Rusk instantly identified Asian communism with "Soviet imperialism."

Acheson promoted American military aid to France in order to "restore stability" in Indochina, with the specific purpose of "checking the Soviets." Halle says the unhappy consequence of this particular error was to force "the Russian, Chinese and Viet Minh regimes into closer relations and greater interdependence than was natural to them." The US heavily bankrolled the French war in Indochina; when the French effort collapsed, the US backed Diem; when *he* collapsed, the US willy-nilly inherited France's role, and with it the stigma of imperialism, "as an outside power trying to impose its will on the native population." Halle believes the United States does not have "imperialistic ambition"; but, as every English schoolboy knows, there is such a thing as backing into an empire in a fit of absentmindedness. And he admits there is an element in the United States that has always wanted to "show the American flag far and wide in Asia." McKinley talked of "manifest destiny" there, long before Eisenhower piously declared that "the freedom we cherish and defend in Europe and in the Americas is no different from the freedom that is imperiled in Asia." Halle says the result has been that the United States finds itself "defending dictatorships from Korea to South America." Inadvertently?

Washington, by continuation of the Cold War, acquired "the equivalent of a vested interest in the Soviet menace." Others have pointed out that while the Russians have no bases and indeed no actual alliance beyond their Eastern European sphere, there was already by 1958 a worldwide net of American military bases, whose cost could be measured by the fact that military spending in that year exceeded the total American budget of 1948, when the United States carried most of the burden of arming the West. Halle suggests that an "immense expansion of the American military establishment" has coincided, if that is the proper verb, with Washington's foreign policy thinking becoming "progressively coarsened." But the coarsening began inside the State Department, at the time of the McCarthy witchhunt. He witnessed it from the inside, and his account of it betrays him for once into a passion that does him credit.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Peter Michelson *is on the English faculty of Notre Dame University. The first section of his essay appeared in the September 2 issue of this journal.* Barbara Howes' *newest collection of poems,* Looking Up at Leaves, *was a major contender for the 1967 National Book Awards.* Richard Tillinghast, *a young American poet just out of Harvard, is at present living in the Middle East.* Charles Thomas Samuels *is on the English faculty of Williams College.* Howard Junker *is an associate editor of* Newsweek.

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TELEVISION

Underground Channels

The first video tape recorders, introduced by Ampex in 1956, sold for $75,000. A breakthrough in recording head technology six years later opened up the non-broadcast and home markets. And today the lowest priced, complete Sony outfit retails for $1,240.

Almost all of the 10,000 or so VTRs owned by non-broadcasters belong to institutions, not individuals. Closed-circuit video has been put to use in education, medicine and industry and by convention packagers, bowling instructors and police departments. But the number of machines in private hands, even in this affluent society, may not exceed 500. That's the guess of Richard Ekstract of *Tape Recording* magazine, who predicts that a VTR for less than $500 will hit the market within a year.

Sony has already announced the November introduction of an 18-pound, $1,250 portable recorder and camera. This rig will not play back, but it will run three 20-minute tapes without recharging. So amateurs will now be able to wander around shooting video.

The price of tape is already competitive with 8 mm film – an hour of half-inch Sony tape costs $40, one-inch Ampex tape costs $60 an hour – and much cheaper than processed 16 mm black-and-white reversal which costs $160 an hour – without sound.

Tape editing without an expensive electronic editor (the cheapest Ampex unit costs $8,000) is only approximate. Montage is impossible. But tape does offer immediate playback. It can be erased again and again. And its image, which may lack high resolution, does look "live."

While instant pornography probably makes up the bulk of the home production so far, a video counterpart of the Underground Cinema has already appeared. The first private network, "Channel One," surfaced this summer in New York's East Village. Housed in a chic, air-conditioned theater whose thrust stage is now a pretty Zen garden of pebbles and whose ceiling sprouts three TV monitors (for the different sections of the audience), "Channel One" takes the old medium, network programming, for its content.

The string of spoofs – take-offs on talk shows, cooking lessons, weather reports and sexy soap commercials – worked up by Kenneth Shapiro and Lane Sarasohn are not that different from what Bob and Ray were doing in the mid-50's. But they are funny. They could only be effective on "television" itself. And, most important, Shapiro is the first television artist to lay out $6,500 and set up shop for himself.

In 1965 Andy Warhol shot about ten hours of tape interviews with Edie Sedgwick, Paul America *et al.*, using a $10,000 rig lent him as a promotional gimmick by *Tape Recording*. But after one public showing, on the tracks of the New York Central, beneath the Waldorf Astoria, the equipment was reclaimed. And Warhol today can only look back, wistfully, and declare: "Television is what we'd really like to do. . . the lines and distortions are so fantastic."

Shapiro, 25 years old, grew up doing parlor theatricals under the direction of his mother, who finally guided him to a child comic's job with Milton Berle. Shapiro spent nine years in the infant industry, amassing credits like the Alcoa Hour, Studio One and the Eddie Cantor Show, before dropping out under the pressure of puberty.

His return to the medium was, in some ways, predestined. After earning one of Ampex's first audio recorders, by making an A in math, Shapiro, then 14, established his own, domestic radio station. Now he is the producer, chief technician and star of his own comedy hour.

In the show's teaser, which comes on with a fading of the house lights and Captain Video's Wagnerian theme song, Shapiro's wife plays a seductress who confounds an inept suitor (Shapiro) by wearing not one, but two brassieres. Even Shapiro's mother appears in a cameo – as a Jewish mama/go-go dancer.

Other diversions include: a hippy "Today" show complete with recipes for psychedelicacies like "a mixture of barley, malt, hops and water"; a cultural respite in which Anthony Hecht, a former professor at Shapiro's college, Bard, emotes his way through "The Hollow Men" while whipped cream plops on his head; a kiddie show in which, after the Big People have been shooed from the room, Ko Ko the Clown reads from *Fanny Hill*.

Much of this is adolescent let's-pretend. And Shapiro admits many hippies leave "the world's first groove tube" laughing, but dissatisfied. It seems they expect "experimental" television to be something of a disco-drug lite-show. Indeed, a correspondent to the *East Village Other* recently proposed using television as "a meditational tool."

"The problem which presents itself

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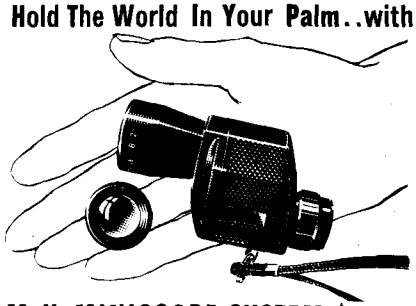

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immediately," wrote this guru, "is the surplus of content transmitted by the 'TV industry.' By eliminating the content, one could see the essentially stroboscopic nature of television. And familiar mandalic patterns would be colored and formed by the retina of the eye."

To convert to mandalic video: first, tune a "full channel" to maximum brightness, minimum contrast, full vertical hold. Then, tune in an "empty channel" and "concentrate on sending your meditations out from your ashram to mine."

Non-content television has already been explored, in depth, on the "prepared" TV sets of Nam June Paik, a Korean avant-gardist living in New York. Since 1963 Paik has played with video distortions by modifying internal circuitry and by applying magnets to the tube itself. The electronic abstractions Paik obtains on his magic oscilliscope are especially marvelous when he banks several sets together. Later this year, at the Bonino Gallery, he will show an "electronic cross" of 15 black-and-white sets. Since May, Paik has been working at the Bell Telephone Laboratories toward an electronic opera in which a computer would manipulate both audio and video inputs.

Early experiments with *live* closed-circuit video have been as dull as those views of the back stairs visible on the lobby monitors of expensive apartment buildings. Several pieces at last October's "Nine Evenings of Art and Technology," at a New York armory, used live video projection onto a series of huge screens. Only Robert Rauschenberg overcame the banality of seeing on Super-Closed-Circuit what was available to the naked eye. Rauschenberg had his dance piece performed in darkness, shot with infrared-sensitive cameras.

In January, John Cage delivered a dinner-concert at the 92nd St. YMHA, which offered the audience peripheral slide and film information plus video views of Cage and six other artists eating and conversing on stage. And at the Howard Wise gallery this summer, Marta Minujin showed her "Minuphone," a Bell System booth equipped with an array of gear, including a hidden TV camera and a monitor built into the floor – to give the participant "information" about himself.

Some critics have already denied that closed-circuit qualifies as true television. "Non-broadcast television is like beer without carbohydrates," insists Lewis Freedman, deputy director of Public Broadcast Laboratory, the Fred Friendly experiment - in - cultural - TV that goes on this November. Real television, for Freedman, is "free-flowing, continuous, free of charge and universal." VTR video, then, is at best, a "360° telescope that puts the viewer in almost direct touch with reality." And "Channel One," maintains Freedman, who has not seen it, "can only be a little downtown thing, only a funny idea, an instance. If it were successful, it would have to be absorbed into the real system."

What "Channel One" could become is the nucleus of an alternative system of distribution, doing for tape what the inspirational Film-makers Cinematheque and Cooperative did for the Underground Cinema. There is no reason, once VTRs become widely available, why video-theatres should not appear everywhere. Both Ampex and Sony now guarantee the interchangeability of tapes made on their own machines.

Underground Cinema, as a movement, however, becomes a quick bore. But VTRs with their immediate playback and the chance to erase should encourage critical discipline. Moreover, VTRs offer sync sound, a capability amateur film makers seldom have.

With VTRs, then, artists will be working in a contemporary, not a 19th century medium. They will not have color, unfortunately, although Ampex offers a color VTR for $4,995 and Sony is planning one next spring at about $1,500. The problem is the color camera, which now costs $18,000, with no indication of an imminent price breakthrough.

But lack of color could hardly be crucial. Film makers didn't have cameras they could tote around *à la cinéma-vérité* until five years ago. And already, in November, video makers will have that capability. An image-making revolution equal to the one spawned by the development of the Kodak, should be at hand.

HOWARD JUNKER

Correspondence

Business Crime

Sirs:

Ralph Nader's recent piece ("Business Crime," July 1) expresses concern that auto industry executives are not faced with jail sentences if they wilfully violate federal motor vehicle safety standards. . . . None of the eight safety standard laws currently on the books is enforced by *both* civil penalties and criminal sanctions. Four (the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, the Hazardous Substances Act, the Mine Safety Act, and the Motor Carrier Act) are enforced only by criminal prosecutions leading to jail sentences and fines. Four (the Federal Aviation Act, the Railroad Safety Appliances Act, the Motor Vehicle Air Pollution Act, and the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act) are enforced only by the imposition of civil penalties or fines. Significantly, when the Congress merged the earlier Brake Fluid Act and Seat Belt Act into the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the criminal provisions of the two earlier laws were dropped in favor of the civil penalties of the 1966 Act. . . .

The use of criminal sanctions against individuals as a further means of enforcing the regulation of business conduct is a more complex and debatable matter than Mr. Nader suggests. It may be true that the deterrent aspects of criminal sanctions are likely to be especially effective among white-collar groups, for example business executives subject to the antitrust laws. But as the National Crime Commission Task Force pointed out, the use of criminal sanctions in this area raises some substantial practical problems – such as the difficulties of securing evidence of criminal guilt on the part of particular individuals. Considerations such as these prompted the Department of Justice to oppose the addition of criminal sanctions to the proposed auto safety legislation. . . .

The Commission Task Force concluded that "application of criminal sanctions in this area raises some of the most delicate and perplexing problems confronting the criminal

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justice system." Such a conclusion by acknowledged experts in the criminal law field tends to support the congressional selection of enforcement tools appropriate for the auto safety legislation. . . .

Lloyd N. Cutler
Washington, D. C.

In reply . . .

Drug companies have knowingly failed to warn of severe adverse effects and have falsely advertised their products. Auto companies have knowingly allowed defective cars to reach market and use without recall or even notification of the unsuspecting driver. The consequences of such corporate behavior by these two industries – both clients of Mr. Cutler – have been dead and injured people. Yet Mr. Cutler tries to persuade us that criminal sanctions are not needed and are not practicable. . . . Those at the top of the corporate hierarchy can say they didn't know and those at the bottom can say they were just taking orders. In the meantime, the victims are hauled off in coffins or laid up in hospitals. . . .

To cite existing statutes which do not have both civil and criminal sanctions is merely to reveal deficiency, not express justification. Reasoning from the assumed difficulty of conviction to the abolition of the sanction itself is specious. As Senator Vance Hartke asked in the floor debate over his three-month-old amendment to add the criminal sanction, why was there such furious industry lobbying to a penalty that would only be applied to knowing and wilful violations? The reply is obvious. Because only the criminal sanction pierces the corporate structure and goes to the culpable individuals. . . .

Ralph Nader

Player Piano

Sirs:

Reading your July 8 issue and Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* (published 1952) at about the same time is a rather chilling experience.

From your article "Vietnam – Fencing in the North" comes this paragraph:

"An electric fence of this sort would make use of improved night observation devices using light intensification techniques; personnel de-

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tection radars which see moving targets by means of the Doppler shift . . . seismic detectors . . . magnetic detection devices; infrared sensors; ultraviolet sensors; acoustical amplifiers; "electric eye" beam-breaking devices and other gadgetry. Some would have a link to rapid data-processing equipment. . . ."

From Vonnegut:

"My God I wish you could of seen it. The poor bastards fryin' on the electric fence, the proximity mines poppin' under 'em, the microwave sentinels openin' up with the remote-control machine-gun nests, and the fire-control system swiveling the guns and flamethrowers around as long as anything was quiverin' within a mile of the place. And that's how I got the Silver Star."

The book concerns itself with the problem of the new American aristocracy of managers and technicians, backed by machine power.

From your article "Boosterism" (quoting President Johnson):

"We own half the trucks in the world. We own almost half the radios in the world. We own a third of all the electricity that's produced in the world. We own a fourth of all the steel . . . And although we have only about six percent of the population of the world, we have half of its wealth."

Vonnegut:

"(A play, music in background) Thirty-one point seven times as many television sets as all the rest of the world put together! (Music gets louder.) Ninety-three percent of all the world's electrostatic dust precipitators! Seventy-seven percent of all the world's automobiles! Ninety-eight percent of its helicopters! Eighty-one point nine percent of its refrigerators! (Music gets louder still.) Seventy-one point three percent of the world's generating capacity! . . ."

Et cetera. By the way, the President of the United States in Vonnegut's book is named Jonathan Lynn.

Richard P. Fischer
New York, N.Y.

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Of Guns and Men

Sirs:

TRB (August 5) scathingly denounces the "anti-riot" bill, promulgated by the House, as having no bearing upon the actual *causes* of these riots. Right. A real piece of Congressional wishful thinking.

But in the same column TRB pleads for strong anti-gun legislation with the words, "Newark, Plainfield and Detroit all bear witness to the wisdom of making pistols, rifles and machine guns available," just as though these inanimate objects, like "agitators," were somehow responsible for the fury of the ghetto.

Passing a law against "guns" is just as meaningless as passing one against "agitators" – neither one even touches the basic problems involved while whittling away at basic American rights. Fifty million law abiding and responsible American citizens own firearms, twenty million or more of us hunt and shoot skeet and trap. We most certainly do not approve of the criminal misuse of firearms nor of children acquiring them. But why not make parents more responsible for their children's actions and by all means let us have some effective legislation, and even effective *enforcement* of existing laws, relating to the *criminal misuse* of firearms. Incidentally, TRB, it is and has been for about 30 years, a Federal offense to sell or own a machine gun or fully automatic weapon without license and approval.

Most of the proposed legislation merely affects the law abiding citizen while doing little to prevent the *criminal* from obtaining firearms or deterring him from their use. Is it *really* to our advantage to disarm the responsible citizen and householder (which is surely the intent of most pending legislation) while ignoring the fact that the criminal element will continue to obtain and use firearms? New York's Sullivan Act certainly doesn't keep *that* city's criminals from being armed but it sure makes it virtually impossible for the average citizen to acquire the means of protecting home or person.

Certainly the last thing any thug, housebreaker, dope addict, mugger or rapist wants is to encounter an armed victim – he's looking for easy prey. And that's just what is provided for him.

Surely no one really expects to be able to effectively legislate against the actions of a madman and so prevent the occurrence of another Austin or Dallas. Indeed, you don't even need a firearm to kill – remember, a *knife* was used to take the lives of those defenseless nurses in Chicago. Isn't anyone regretful that not one of those eight girls owned a pistol which she had been taught to use?

While John F. Kennedy was not my brother he was *my* President and I wept at his death and still mourn his passing. But I do not believe he would be either revenged or honored by the passage of an unfair and basically ineffective law opposed and resented by at *least* 30,000,000 of his honest and decent countrymen.

If a Negro hates his white fellow citizen so much that he *wants* to kill him we are, indeed, in deep trouble. But let us not insult the Negro even further by advocating the passage of an illconceived "gun-law" as a misguided measure to deal with his hatred and discontent!

Congress is merely abrogating its responsibilities to the nation if it passes such a law merely out of its frustrations about the Ghetto problems and as another anti-riot measure.

Let us have instead of an "anti-gun" law a really tough measure, which the courts will enforce with equal toughness, dealing with those who *misuse the gun* in a criminal manner. Such a bill will have the full support of the NRA and the responsible firearms owners of this land, all the millions of us.

Roger Barlow
New Market, Va.

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The Welfare Poor

Sirs:

The article on the Rights of the Welfare Poor (August 1) by Cloward and Piven ignores some basic factors in its sentimental plea for the rights of unwed mothers to government checks for their illegitimate children.

I have delved into this subject deeply. Apart from theoretical knowledge, I have a vast experience in the psychology of these unwed mothers from my own extensive experience in the obstetric delivery of an ever increasing number of bastards every year. . . .

It is a well-known medical fact that illegitimate children suffer from a vastly increased number of serious psychiatric diseases than normal children. As current statistics show an ever increasing rate of bastards in the United States, so do the statistics of increasing psychiatric disorders among children as well as adults.

Therefore, Messrs. Cloward and Piven, society's great problem is not to encourage mothers to have more illegitimate children. The obvious answer is to combat the multitudinous causes that are destroying the perhaps old-fashioned but psychiatrically sounder family. . . .

The whole concept of giving women an allowance for each new bastard produced is absolute madness. When one considers the likelihood of insanity in illegitimate children, our American society is actually paying women to commit a crime that is worse than burglary or arson. . . .

Finally, as your educated readers know only too well, overpopulation is one of the two critical problems of our age. Subsidies for these huge illegitimate families is adding to this problem instead of helping towards a solution.

Norman M. Hornstein, MD
Southport, N.C.

Race and Class

Sirs:

There appears to be a tendency to confuse racial conflict plaguing this country with class conflict. As Michael Miles pointed out ("Revolution or Reform on the Black Left," Aug. 19), Stokely Carmichael seemingly has fallen prey to this temptation. Judging by the same issue, the editors appear to suffer from the same confusion; jobs and housing may provide a solution to a problem generating class tensions, but is the problem that simple?

The strongest evidence yet presented that racial tensions in the US are not class tensions comes from some surveys disclosed recently in *Science*, showing participation in the Watts riot of 1965 was nearly as great among middle-class Negroes as among the unemployed slum dwellers. Several police chiefs have testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee to the high rate of employment among Negroes arrested for looting in several riot-struck cities. Hatred for "whitey" is not confined to the impoverished and unemployed but seemingly spreads through the entire Negro community, and as Mr. Miles quotes Frantz Fanon, "the practice of violence binds them together. . . ."

The editors of *The New Republic* call for jobs "that will restore Negro self-respect." Here is the crux of the problem; jobs cannot *restore* Negro self-respect; the Negro has never been allowed the luxury of self-respect in America. And until the Negro can enjoy self-respect, and until the racial pride, sought for example in black power, engulfs the Negro community, racial tensions will be with us and the violence will grow. The problem is thus one of attitudes, both Negro and white, and TRB is grossly overoptimistic in predicting that the problem is not insoluble; certainly it cannot simply be overcome with more money.

Melville R. V. Sahyun
St. Paul, Minn.

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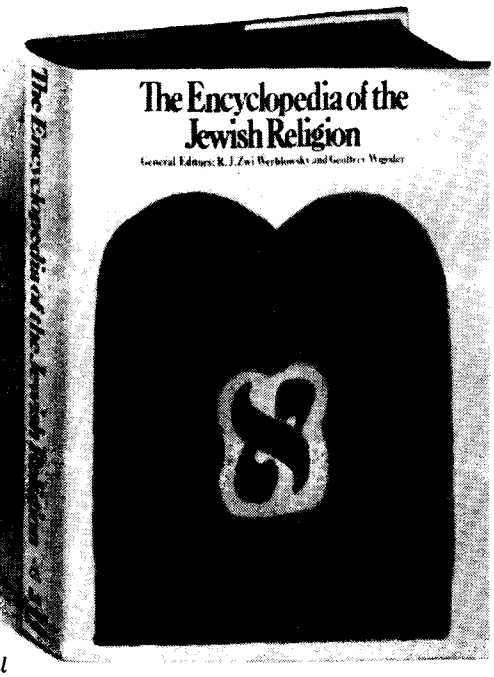

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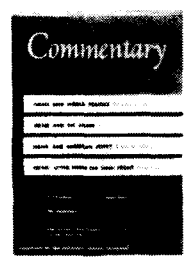

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